A SUMMARY OF ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE

الملخص الفقهي

Volume 1

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In the Name of Allah, the *Entirely Merciful*, the *Especially Merciful*

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English Islamic Library: A series in English covering central and various issues in Creed, Jurisprudence and Islamic Sciences by authors who have expert knowledge in their fields. It targets both the Muslims and the non-Muslims in the west as well as those who study Islamic Sciences in English in Arab countries. It also targets those who are engaged in propagating Islam in the West.

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About the Author

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He is a member of many academic institutions including the Board of Senior Ulema, the Permanent Committee for Fatwa and Research, the Islamic Academy of Muslim World League, the Committee of Supervising Du`ah, and many other scholastic bodies.

He has written more than sixty published works covering Muslim Creed, Islamic Jurisprudence and Muslim's Conduct.

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Publisher

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Translator's Preface

This book is an English translation of sheikh professor Sâli<u>h</u> Al-Fawzân's الملخص الفقهي *'A Summary of Islamic Jurisprudence'*: Dâr Al-`Â<u>s</u>imah, 2001 (ISBN:3967/21). Our main aim in providing the English translation is propagating the true Da`wah that derives from Allah's Book and His Messenger's Sunnah. This is a duty that every Muslim should cherish. Allah says: ***"And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful."*** (Âlu `Imrân: 104). With this in mind, this translated work is, then, a humble response to our realization of a great responsibility to give the English speaking reader access to rich Islamic Jurisprudence Literature that simply focuses on the rules of jurisprudence and their proofs from the Qur'ân, Sunnah and the practice of the Righteous Salaf in addition to the opinions of the scholars of jurisprudence on controversial issues as well as the proofs they quote in support of their opinions. In doing so, we have left no stone unturned to make sure that the final copy of a translated book meets a specific high quality standard that would convey the same meaning intended by the author and expressed in the original source text. In effect, we have tried to set a balance between the originality of thought and the nature of the style of language.

To attain this aim, our work (in this book and others) exhibits certain distinctive features, namely, the process of translation, the style, the attention paid to the sociolinguistic aspects (i.e., transliteration, glossary and endnotes). We touch upon these features in the following section.

1.PROCESS

Before reaching the publisher, our work goes through a developmental process to guarantee that the final version of the translated book is as perfect as can be.

In effect, this process commenc.es with the first-hand translation, which is done by some very carefully chosen translators who are native-speakers of Arabic and have a native-like command of the target language. The main principle that governs the translation process is that the translator is after integrity. With integrity as the main target, the translators would not be tempted to impose their own ideas on the text nor would they gloss over the difficult paragraphs instead of taking the trouble to find out what is really meant. Translators would do their best to convey both the content and spirit of the original.

The next step of the process is undertaken by a reviser who has a high profile in translating religious texts and is aware of the traps that one might fall into. In addition, he has a thorough religious background knowledge that enables him to detect any unintended error in conveying the meaning.

The revised version is then submitted to a picky editor who is well-versed in the target language and has substantial knowledge of Islamic Sciences.

Finally, the edited version is handed over to a native-speaker of English who is knowledgeable in Islamic Sciences to make sure that the translation is readable and meaningful to the target audience.

2.STYLE

A natural outgrowth of the processes adopted in translation is the style the final version has come out in. The intended meaning of the author has been conveyed in a style that is authentic and as close to the original as possible. It really sounds authentic: So natural that the work does not read like a translation, but an indigenous piece of writing. The translation version is marked by remarkable variety and richness as well as tremendous skill at writing within formal religious genre. Moreover, attempts have been made to have it simple, clear and appealing to the target audience.

3.ATTENTION TO SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS

As a way to fill up the gap caused by sociolinguistic differences between the two languages (source language and target language), our work includes some additional features (i.e., transliteration, glossary and endnotes) that would guarantee better understanding of the concepts and ideas that might confuse the English speaking reader due to the lack of schemata in this field.

A- TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

In the process of translation, we made a serious attempt to limit the use of transliterated Arabic terms (see table in p. X) to the following two situations:

i) There is no English expression that can reflect the same meaning as the original term.

ii) The Arabic term is of such importance that it is essential to familiarize the reader with it.

B-GLOSSARY

At the end of the book, we have included a glossary defining common Arabic terms that fulfill the above criteria. Included in the glossary also are terms that need further explanation.

C-ENDNOTES

In the endnotes, we have given clear and concise explanations of the terms that are not clear or understandable to the target reader due to the sociolinguistic differences in addition to the commentaries written by the author himself. Furthermore, each *hadîth* mentioned in the text of the book is ascribed in the endnotes to the book it is quoted from.

D-INDICES

To facilitate the process of going through the book and save the reader's time, we have included two indices, namely, subject index and name index. So, if the reader is looking for specific information or a given name, s/he would go directly to the index to find the page number.

4. QUR'ÂN TRANSLATION

The Qur'ân is Allah's exact words. These words can never ever be exactly translated into other languages because of, among other things, possible misinterpretations and limited human understanding. What is followed in the book is to translate the meanings as understood by Muslim scholars. We solely depended on the '***Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'ân***', translated by Saheeh International – Riyadh and published by Abulqasim Publishing House. When a verse is cited, the English interpretation is given between quotation marks "...." in indented, bold, and italicized format. The location of the Qur'anic verse, the name of the sura is given below to the verse as it is illustrated in the example below:

> ***"And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that there is no deity except Me, so worship Me."***
>
> (Al-Anbyâ': 25)

5. *HADÎTH* TRANSLATION

Similarly, when we cite a *hadîth*, we mention the book of *hadîth* it is quoted from in addition to its number in the book. Further, the translation of Prophetic *hadîth* is represented in an indented format, italicized and between quotation marks "..." as it is illustrated in the example below:

> *"Do not drink in gold or silver vessels nor eat in similar bowls (i.e. bowls made of gold or silver), for they belong to them (the disbelievers) in this world and to us in the Hereafter."*

INTRODUCTION

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace be upon our Prophet Mu<u>h</u>ammad, the Seal of prophets, and upon his household, his Companions, and whoever follows their example with good conduct until the Day of Recompense.

To commence, this is a brief account of juristic issues, in which views are provided with proofs from the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) and the Qur'ân. I have previously delivered the content of this book in the form of sermons broadcast on radio, and I have been repeatedly asked by the audience to redeliver them, and to publish them as a treatise, for the sake of continuous benefit, if Allah wills. In fact, I never intended this book to be published when it was under preparation, but in response to the wish of many people, I reviewed it, arranged its contents, and presented it to be published. And here it is now, gentle reader, between your hands; whatever correctness and benefit you find therein are out of the Grace of Allah, Alone, and whatever mistakes you find are mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for them.

This treatise is an abstract of a book entitled *Ar-Rawdul-Murbi` fî Sharh Zâdul-Mustaqni`* including its footnotes, written by Sheikh `Abdur-Rahmân Ibn Muhammad Ibn Qâsim (may Allah have mercy on him), bearing in mind that I added some remarks, when necessary.

I ask Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, to guide us all to useful knowledge and righteous deeds. May Allah confer peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his household, and his Companions.

The Virtues of Understanding Religion

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his household, his Companions, and whoever follows their example with good conduct until the Day of Recompense.

To commence, understanding the religion is considered one of the best deeds, and a sign of goodness. The Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"If Allah wants to do good for a person, He makes him understand the religion."*[1]

This is because comprehending the religion leads to useful knowledge upon which righteous deeds depend. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Fath: 28)

"Guidance" here refers to useful knowledge, and "the religion of truth" is that which leads to righteous deeds. Besides, Allah commanded the Prophet (PBUH) to invoke him for more knowledge; Allah, Exalted be He, said:

> ***"... And say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge.' "***
>
> (Qur'ân: Tâhâ: 114)

Al-Hâfiz Ibn Hajar comments that the aforesaid Qur'anic verse, ***"...And say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge,' "*** is a clear indication of the merit and excellence of knowledge, for Allah never commanded His Prophet (PBUH) to invoke Him for more of anything other than knowledge[2]. The Prophet (PBUH) used to refer to the assemblies wherein useful knowledge is taught as *"The Gardens of Paradise,"* and he (PBUH) stated that *"Men of knowledge are the inheritors of prophets."*

There is no doubt that before one starts doing something one should know how to perform it in the best way, so as to perform it well to harvest its desired fruits. Likewise, it is by no means reasonable that one starts worshipping one's Lord – the way through which one's salvation from Hellfire and admittance to Paradise are gained – without having due knowledge.

As such, people are divided into three categories regarding knowledge and deeds:

The first category is represented in those who combine useful knowledge along with righteous deeds. Those are the ones whom Allah has guided to the straight path; the path of those upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous, and excellent indeed are these as companions.

The second category is represented in those who learn useful knowledge but do not act accordingly. Those are the ones who have evoked Allah's anger, like the Jews and whoever follows their footsteps.

The third category is represented in those who act without having knowledge. Those are the ones who are astray, namely the Christians and their likes.

These three categories are mentioned in the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*, which we recite in every *rak`ah* (unit of prayer) of our prayers:

> ***"Guide us to the straight path – the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Fâtihah: 6-7)

In his interpretation of the aforesaid verses of the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah*, **Sheikh Muhammad Ibn `Abdul-Wahhâb** (may Allah have mercy on him) has stated:

> *"The scholars meant in the verse that reads, **'those who have evoked (Allah's) anger'** are those who do not act in accordance with their knowledge, and **'...those who are astray'** are the ones who act without knowledge. The former is the quality of the Jews, while the latter is that of the Christians. Some ignorant people mistakenly believe that those two qualities are restricted to the Jews and the Christians, forgetting that Allah commands them to recite the above-mentioned Qur'anic invocation seeking refuge with Him from being one of the*

people of these two qualities. Glory be to Allah! How do those ignorant people think that they are safe from these qualities, though they are taught and commanded by Allah to keep on invoking Him (through the aforesaid verses) seeking His refuge against them?! Are they not aware that they thus assume evil about Allah?!"[3]

This shows the wisdom behind the obligation of reciting this great Sura (i.e., *Al-Fâtihah*) in every *rak'ah* of our prayers (whether obligatory or supererogatory). It is because this sura contains many great secrets, among them is the great Qur'anic invocation that reads, ***"Guide us to the straight path – the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Fâtihah: 6-7) Through this invocation, we ask Allah to guide us to follow the conduct and the way of the people who have useful knowledge and perform righteous deeds, which is the way to salvation in both this world and the Hereafter. We also invoke Him to safeguard us from the pathway of the ones astray, who have neglected either the righteous deeds or the useful knowledge.

Thus, we could argue that useful knowledge is that derived from the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition). It is gained by means of deep understanding and comprehension of both, which can be achieved through the help of religious instructors or scholars. This can also be achieved through the books of exegesis of the Qur'ân and those of *Hadîth*, as well as the books of jurisprudence and those of Arabic grammar – the language in which the Qur'ân has been revealed. Such books are the best means of comprehending the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah*.

So as to perform the acts of worship so perfectly, you should, dear Muslim brother, learn what leads to the perfection of your performance of these various acts of worship, such as Prayer, Fasting and *Hajj* (Pilgrimage). You should also be aware of the rulings on *Zakâh*[4] as well as the rulings on the dealings that concern you, so as to make use of what Allah has made lawful for you and avoid what He has made unlawful. You should observe this to ensure that the money you earn and the food you eat are lawfully obtained, in order to be one of those whose supplications are granted by Allah. In fact, you have to know about all these matters, and this could be easily achieved, Allah willing, provided that you have resolute determination and sincere intention. So, be keen on reading useful relevant books, and keep in touch with religious scholars to ask them about whatever ruling you are in doubt about and to be acquainted with the rulings of your religion.

In addition, you should take an interest in attending religious symposiums and lectures delivered at mosques and the like, listening to the broadcast religious programs, and reading religious magazines and publications. If you concern yourself with such good activities, your religious knowledge will increase, and your insight will be enlightened.

Also, do not forget, dear brother, that knowledge increases and grows when it is practically applied. Thus, if your deeds are according to your knowledge, Allah surely will increase your knowledge. This corresponds with the maxim stating, "He whose deeds are done in accordance with his knowledge, Allah will bestow upon him the knowledge of that which he has no knowledge about." This is confirmed by the Glorious Qur'anic verse that reads:

> ***"... And fear Allah. And Allah teaches you. And Allah is Knowing of all things."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 282)

In fact, the worthiest thing to spend your time on is seeking knowledge, for which the people of good judgment compete. It is through knowledge that hearts maintain living and deeds are purified.

Allah, Exalted be His Words and Glorified be His Attributes, praises the scholars who act in accordance with their knowledge, and states their elevated degrees, as He mentions in His Glorious Book, the Qur'ân:

> ***"... Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?' Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding."***
> (Qur'ân: Az-Zumar: 9)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

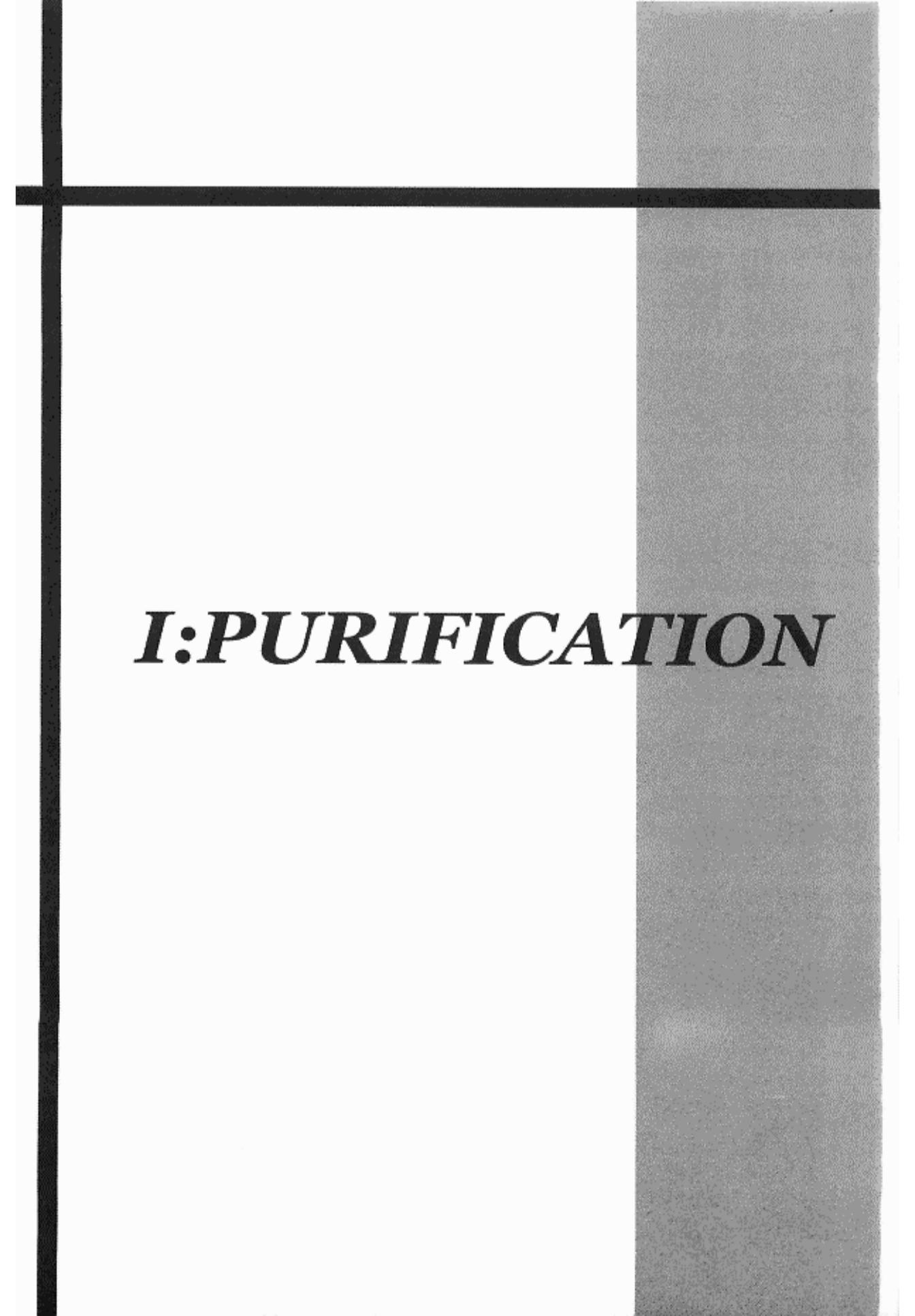
> ***"... Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mujâdilah: 11)

So, Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, shows the merit of those given knowledge along with faith, and tells us that He is Acquainted with and Aware of what we do. Thus, Allah shows us the necessity of combining both knowledge and righteous deeds, and tells us that both have to be out of one's sincere faith and fear of Him, Glorified be He.

In accordance with the Qur'anic duty of cooperating in righteousness and piety, we will – if Allah wills – provide you, gentle reader, through this book with some information of the juristic inheritance which our scholars extracted and wrote down in their books. We will provide you with what can be easily understood, so that it can benefit you and help you in gaining more useful knowledge.

Finally, we invoke Allah to bestow useful knowledge upon all of us, and to guide us to the righteous deeds. We also invoke Him, Glorified and Exalted be He, to make us see the truth as it really is, and guide us to follow it, and to see falsehood as it really is, and grant us the ability to avoid it, He is Hearing and Responsive.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (71), Muslim (2386).
2 See *Fathul-Bârî* (1/187)
3 See Ibn Ghannâm's *Târîkh Najd*.
4 *Zakâh* is an annual expenditure for the benefit of the Muslim community, primarily to help the poor, required from those Muslims who have excess wealth. Paying *Zakâh* is one of the five main pillars of Islam (for more elaboration, refer to the chapter on *Zakâh*).

I:PURIFICATION

Purification and Water

Prayer is the second pillar of Islam, after the Two Testifications of Faith[1]. Prayer is what distinguishes Muslims from disbelievers; it is the cornerstone of Islam, and it is the first thing one is questioned about when called to account (on the Day of Judgment). Therefore, if it is correctly performed and (thus) accepted (by Allah), all one's good deeds will be accepted, but if rejected, so will be all one's deeds.

Prayer is mentioned in many different contexts in the Glorious Qur'ân, stressing its various virtues; sometimes Allah commands establishing it regularly, and sometimes He demonstrates its merits; at times, Allah shows the reward for establishing it, and at other times He associates it with patience, enjoining seeking His help through both (patience and prayer) in adversity. Hence, prayer has been made the comfort of the eyes of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) in this world, as it is the ornament of prophets, the sign of righteous servants, and the connection between servants and the Lord of the Worlds. Prayer, in addition, prevents immorality and wrongdoing.

Prayer is not deemed valid unless the one performing it is in a state of both minor and major ritual purity, as much as possible. The means of purification for prayer is either water (in ablution) or clean earth (in *tayammum*, i.e., dry ablution) in case water is unavailable. Due to the above, *faqîhs*[2] (may Allah have mercy on them) used to start their books with handling the issue of purification. Since Prayer is at the head of the Pillars of Islam, following the Two Testifications of Faith, it is appropriate to start with handling its prerequisites, among which is purification, the key to prayer as mentioned in the following *hadîth*: *"The key to prayer is purification."*[3] This is because a state of minor ritual impurity is like a padlock that hinders one from performing prayer. But once one performs ablution, that padlock is unlocked, as purification is the 'key' to prayer. Thus, purity is one of the most central conditions of prayer; a condition is to be fulfilled before performing the action stipulating it.

Linguistically, purity means cleanliness and purification from all matters and spiritual impurities. Jurisprudentially, purity means the removal of ritual impurity as well as the impure objects. The removal of ritual impurity can be achieved by using water with the intention of purification. In case of major ritual impurity, one uses water and washes one's whole body. Yet, one only washes the four parts of ablution in case of minor ritual impurity. One can use the substitute for water (namely clean earth) if water is unavailable or one is unable to use it (i.e. one can perform *tayammum*[4] instead). We will, Allah willing, elaborate on how to purify oneself from both minor and major ritual impurity.

Let us now point out the qualities of the water used for purification, and those of the water that is not. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... And We send down from the sky pure water."***
> (Qur'ân: Al-Furqân: 48)

Allah also says:

> ***"... And sent down upon you from the sky, rain by which to purify you..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Anfâl: 11)

Pure water is that which is originally pure and can be used as a means of purification. It is also that water which has not undergone any change (i.e. it retains its original characteristics), whether it is sent from the sky such as rain, snow or hail water, running water, such as the water of rivers, springs, wells and seas, or distilled water. This is the proper kind of water to be used for removing ritual or physical impurity. However, it is indisputable that if the characteristics of such water change due to an impure material, it is impermissible to use it for

purification. Yet, if it is just a slight change and is caused by a pure material, it is permissible to be used as a purifier, according to the preponderant of the two opinions maintained by scholars in this regard.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah states:

> *"There are many cases in which the characteristics of little or much water are affected by pure objects, such as potash, soap, lote tree leaves, dust, dough, and suchlike things that may change water. For example, water might be put in a pot containing traces of lote tree leaves that would affect its characteristics, though the water would not be completely changed in this case. Scholars hold two well-known opinions regarding such cases."*

Ibn Taymiyah then mentions those two opinions with the arguments they are based on. He supports the opinion maintaining that it is permissible to use such water for purification, saying:

> *"In fact, this is the sound opinion, for Allah says,* ***"... But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6) *Water here is an indefinite noun in a negative phrase, which, in Arabic, implies that 'water' in the above-mentioned verse includes every thing referred to as 'water' in general, with no distinction between different kinds of water."*[5]

That is to say, Allah has made 'clean earth' the substitute for water (as a purifier) in case water is unavailable or one is unable to use it. The way clean earth is used for purification has been pointed out by the Prophet (PBUH) through the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) - which will be dealt with, Allah willing, in a special chapter. So, decreeing such a substitute for water (i.e. clean earth) is a kind of divine mercy and a way by which Allah makes things easier for His servants. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women [i.e. had sexual intercourse] and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]. Indeed, Allah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 43)

Ibn Hubayrah states:

> *"Muslim scholars uniformly agree that purification with water is obligatory for whoever is obliged to perform prayer, provided water is available; in case water is unavailable, one should use its substitute (i.e. clean earth), in accordance with the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, Exalted be He, says, '... **And find no water, then seek clean earth...**'* (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 43), *and, '... **And sent down upon you from the sky, rain by which to purify you...**'* (Qur'ân: Al-Anfâl: 11)"

This shows the greatness of Islam, the religion of purity, and both physical and spiritual cleanliness. It also shows the loftiness of prayer which one cannot enter upon without being in two states of purity. The first is the spiritual purity from polytheism, by means of testifying the Oneness of Allah and worshipping Him sincerely and devoutly. The second is the physical purity from ritual and tangible impurities, which is performed by means of water or its legal substitutes. We should also know that provided water is still in its original state, mixed with nothing else, it is deemed pure as scholars uniformly agree. They also agree that if any of its three basic characteristics - odor, taste, and color - change due to any impure object, then water is deemed impure and it is impermissible to use it as a means of purification. Yet, some scholars differ regarding the purity of water when any of its characteristics has changed due to a pure object - such as tree leaves (like lote tree leaves), soap, potash, or suchlike pure materials – provided that such a material is not predominant in the resulting mixture. In fact, the sound opinion is that the resulting water is still deemed pure, and it is permissible to use it as a means of purification from both ritual and tangible impurity.

Due to the above, we can state that water is divided into two categories:

1- **Pure water,** which can be used as a purifier, whether it is in its original state, or mixed with a pure object provided it is not prevalent enough to change the composition of water or turn it into another object.

2- **Impure water,** which cannot be used for purification from either ritual or tangible impurity. It is also the water any of whose characteristics (odor, taste, or color) has changed due to an impure object. And Allah, Exalted be He, knows best.

Endnotes

1 The Two Testifications of Faith: Saying, "I testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."
2 *Faqîh*: A scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence.
3 Ahmad (1005) [1/151], Abû Dâwûd (61) [1/42], At-Tirmidhî (3) [1/8] and Ibn Mâjah (275) [1/177].
4 *Tayammum*: Performing dry ablution with clean earth (when water is unavailable or one cannot use it).
5 See *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [21/24,25] and [21/331].

Disbelievers' Pots and Clothes

Pots could be made of iron, wood, leather or the like. The original ruling is the permissibility of using such pots. That is to say, it is permissible to use every pure pot, except two types:

1- Pots made of gold or silver, and the pots having anything related to gold or silver, such as being inlaid or plated with gold or silver, or anything of the kind that makes pots connected with them. The exceptional case here is the pots inlaid with little silver for the sake of repairing them.

The legal proof of the prohibition of using gold and silver pots is the following *hadîth* related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth*[1]:

"Do not drink in gold or silver vessels nor eat in similar bowls (i.e. bowls made of gold or silver), for they belong to them (the disbelievers) in this world and to us in the Hereafter."[2]

In another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) also says:

"He who drinks in silver vessels is only filling his abdomen with Hellfire."[3]

When something is legally prohibited to use, the prohibition is applicable whether this thing is used partially or totally. Therefore, it is prohibited to use pots inlaid or plated with gold or silver or containing anything related to these two materials, excluding the case of a pot inlaid with a little silver, which is permissible as mentioned above; this is illustrated in the *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî, on the authority of Anas Ibn Mâlik (may Allah be pleased with him), who said:

"The cup of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) got broken, and he fixed it with a silver wire at the (place of the) crack."[4]

An-Nawawî (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Muslim scholars uniformly agree that it is prohibited to eat or drink in such pots or even to use them in purposes related to eating or drinking."[5]

This prohibition of using or keeping golden or silver objects applies to both males and females, as the addressee of this prohibition is generalized (i.e. the prohibition applies to both sexes). There is nothing specified for a certain sex in this concern, except for the permissibility for women to make use of both silver and gold for purposes of adornment for their husbands.

On the other hand, it is permissible to use the utensils of disbelievers unless one knows that they are impure. In this case, one can use them only after washing them.

2- The hides of dead animals: It is prohibited to use them unless they are tanned. Yet, scholars differ regarding whether it is permissible to use them after tanning or not. The sound opinion, which is maintained by the majority of scholars, is that it is permissible to use the hides of dead animals after tanning, due to the many *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîths*[6] indicating that. This is because their impurity is temporary, so it is removed by tanning. The Prophet (PBUH) said that the hides of dead animals:

"... Are purified by water and qarz (leaves of a kind of tree which is used for tanning)."

He (PBUH) also said:

"Tanning is the purifying means for hides."[7]

As for the clothes of disbelievers, it is permissible to wear them unless they are known to be impure. This is because the original ruling on their clothes is that they are pure, and they cannot be deemed impure out of mere suspicion. Likewise, it is permissible to use whatever is weaved or dyed by the disbelievers, for the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions used to wear clothes weaved and dyed by disbelievers. And Allah, Exalted be He, knows best.

Endnotes

1 The Group of Compilers of *Hadith* are Al-Bukhârî, Muslim, Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, At-Tirmidhî, An-Nasâ'i, and Ibn Mâjah.

2 Al-Bukhârî (5633) [10/119], Muslim (5361) [7/261], Ahmad (23356) [5/491], Abû Dâwûd (3723) [4/73], At-Tirmidhî (1883) [4/299], An-Nasâ'i (5316) [4/585] and Ibn Mâjah (3414) [4/77].

3 Al-Bukhârî (5634) [10/119], Muslim (5353) [7/254].

4 Al-Bukhârî (3109) [6/255].

5 See *Al-Majmû'* [1/306] and *The Expounding of Muslim's Sahih* [7/255].

6 *Sahih* (authentic) *hadith* is a *hadith* whose chain of transmission has been transmitted by truly pious persons who have been known for their uprightness and exactitude; such a *hadith* is free from eccentricity and blemish.

7 Muslim (813) [2/279] and Ahmad (2521) [1/346].

Things Ritual Impurity Prohibits Doing

There are some deeds which Muslims are prohibited to perform unless they are in a state of purity, due to the greatness and the loftiness of these deeds. What follows is a discussion of these deeds accompanied with the related proofs, so as to familiarize the reader with such deeds and not to perform any of them unless he/she is in the proper state of purity. Furthermore, there are deeds that one in a state of ritual impurity, be it major or minor, is prohibited to do. On the other hand, there are some deeds specifically prohibited only for those in a state of major ritual impurity.

Deeds Prohibited for One in a State of Minor or Major Ritual Impurity

1- Touching the Glorious Book of the Qur'ân

It is prohibited for one in a state of (minor or major) ritual impurity to touch the Glorious Book of the Qur'ân unless with something that prevents direct contact, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"None touch it except the purified..." (Qur'ân: Al-Wâqi`ah: 79)

That is, it is prohibited to touch it unless by those purified from minor and major ritual impurity, according to the opinion that the words "the purified" in the verse refer to human beings. However, there are some exegetes who state that the words 'the purified' in the aforesaid verse refer to the noble angels. Even if the verse is interpreted that the words 'the purified' refer to the angels, they also refer to human beings by implication. To illustrate, it was mentioned in the letter sent by Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to the people of Yemen, as narrated by `Amr Ibn Hazm, that:

"No one should touch the Book of the Qur'ân unless they are pure."[1]

(Related by An-Nasâ'î and other compilers of *Hadîth* with a continuous chain of transmitters)

In addition, **Ibn `Abdul-Barr** said:

"This hadîth is more likely to be a mutawâtir (continuously recurrent) hadîth[2] as it is commonly accepted by scholars."[3]

Shaykhul-Islâm (Ibn Taymiyah) states that the prohibition of touching the Book of the Qur'ân while being in a state of (major or minor) ritual impurity is agreed upon by the Four Imâms[4][5]. **Ibn Hubayrah** also states in his book entitled *Al-Ifsâh* (*Enunciation*), *"They (i.e. the Four Imâms) agree that it is impermissible for one in a state of ritual impurity to touch the Book of the Qur'ân."* However, one in a state of ritual impurity is allowed to hold the Book of the Qur'ân in a cover or a bag so as not to touch it directly. Similarly, one in such a state of impurity is allowed to read or browse through the Book without touching it.

2- Offering Prayer (neither Obligatory nor Supererogatory Prayers)

Scholars uniformly agree that it is impermissible for one in a state of minor or major ritual impurity to perform prayer at all, be it obligatory or supererogatory, provided one is able to purify oneself. This is because Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of janâbah,[6] then purify yourselves..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

Besides, the Prophet (PBUH) said, as related by Muslim and other compilers of *Hadîth*:

> *"Allah does not accept a prayer without purification..."*[7]

He (PBUH) also said:

> *"Allah does not accept the prayer of anyone of you if he passes wind, urine, or stool until he performs the ablution (anew)."*[8]

The above *hadîth* shows that it is impermissible for one to pray while being in a state of impurity, provided one is able to purify oneself. Thus, the prayer offered by one in a state of impurity is invalid, whether it is performed in such a state while one is aware of the ruling or not, and whether one performs it inattentively or intentionally. If one is aware of the ruling and offers prayer intentionally, one is regarded as a sinner who has to undergo discretionary punishment. But if one is unaware of it, and offers prayer inattentively, one in this case is not regarded as a sinner, yet one's prayer is deemed invalid.

3- Performing *Tawâf* (Circumambulating the Ka`bah)

It is impermissible for one in a state of minor or major ritual impurity to perform *tawâf*, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Tawâf is (considered) a prayer; the difference is that Allah made it lawful to speak during it."*[9]

The Prophet (PBUH) used to perform ablution before performing *tawâf*[10]. It was also authentically narrated that he (PBUH) forbade a menstruating woman to perform *tawâf* unless she purified herself[11]. All the above shows that one in a state of minor or major ritual impurity is prohibited to perform *tawâf* until one purifies oneself.

Among the proofs that one in a state of major ritual impurity is prohibited to perform *tawâf* is the following Qur'anic verse:

> ***"O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying or in a state of janâbah, except those passing through [a place of prayer], until you have washed [your whole body]..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 43)

The verse means that one should never enter a mosque while being in a state of major ritual impurity except for those who are passing through it on their

way. Since one in a state of *janâbah* is prohibited to stay in a mosque, then, with greater reason, one in the same state is prohibited to perform *tawâf*.

In a nutshell, the above-mentioned deeds are prohibited to be performed by one in a state of ritual impurity, whether minor or major.

Deeds Prohibited for One in a State of Major Ritual Impurity in Particular

As for the deeds specifically prohibited for one in a state of major ritual impurity, they are as follows:

1- Reciting the Qur'ân

One in a state of major ritual impurity is prohibited to recite the Qur'ân according to the following *hadîth* related by At-Tirmidhî and other compilers of *Hadîth* on the authority of 'Alî Ibn Abû Tâlib (may Allah be pleased with him):

> *"Nothing prevented him (i.e. the Prophet, PBUH) from (reciting) the Qur'ân other than being in a state of janâbah (major ritual impurity)."*[12]

The wording of At-Tirmidhî of the aforesaid *hadîth* is as follows:

> *"He (PBUH) used to recite the Qur'ân for us unless he was in a state of janâbah."*

This proves that it is prohibited for the person in a state of major ritual impurity to recite the Qur'ân. The same ruling applies to both menstruating woman and a woman in a state of postnatal bleeding. Yet, some scholars, such as Shaykhul-Islâm (Ibn Taymiyah), maintain that it is permissible for a menstruating woman to recite the Qur'ân for fear of forgetting it[13].

It is permissible for one in a state of major ritual impurity to use the wording of the Qur'ân with no intention of recitation, rather as a way of remembrance of Allah, such as saying:

"In the Name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful."
(Qur'ân: Al-Fâtihah: 1)

And:

"All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds."
(Qur'ân: Al-Fâtihah: 2)

There are many other examples of that. This is illustrated in the following *hadîth* narrated by `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her):

"The Prophet (PBUH) used to mention Allah in all his conditions."[14]

2- Staying at a Mosque

It is prohibited for one in whatever state of major ritual impurity, be it *janâbah*, menstruation or postnatal bleeding, to stay in a mosque unless one performs ablution. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying or in a state of janâbah, except those passing through [a place of prayer], until you have washed [your whole body]..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 43)

This means that one in a state of major ritual impurity is prohibited to enter a mosque to stay therein. In addition, in the *hadîth* related by Abû Dâwûd, on the authority of `Â'ishah, and graded as *sahih* (authentic) *hadîth* by Ibn Khuzaymah, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"I do not deem the mosque lawful for a menstruating woman or for a person who is in a state of janâbah."*[15]

However, if one in a state of major ritual impurity performs ablution, it is permissible for one then to stay at the mosque, as `Atâ' reported:

> *"I saw some of the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) staying at the mosque while being in a state of janâbah only after performing the (ordinary) ablution performed for prayer."*

The significance of performing ablution here, though one is in a state of *janâbah*, is ***lessening*** the state of *janâbah* so as to make it permissible to stay at the mosque. Likewise, it is permissible for one in a state of *janâbah* to pass through the mosque without staying therein, for Allah says:

> ***"... Except those passing through [a place of prayer]..."***
> (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 43)

That is, one in such a state is only allowed to pass through it for the sake of mere passing.

Whenever there is an exceptional case of a certain prohibition, it is deemed permissible. So, being a passerby is the exceptional case of the general ruling stated by the *hadîth* of the Prophet (PBUH) that goes:

"I do not make the mosque lawful for a menstruating woman or for a person who is in janâbah."

Similarly, it is prohibited for the one in a state of major ritual impurity, without even being in a state of ablution, to be present at the place of performing the Feast (*`Îd*) Prayer. Yet, it is permissible for one to pass through it, for the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"Menstruating women should keep away from the place of performing prayer."[16]

Endnotes

1 Mâlik (297) [p. 196], Ad-Dâraqutnî (433) [1/129], Al-Bayhaqî (409) [1/141], Al-Hâkim (6122) [3/595] and Ad-Dârimî (2183) [2/602].

2 *Mutawâtir* (continuously recurrent) *hadîth* is a *hadith* reported by a large number of narrators whose agreement upon telling a lie is inconceivable (this condition must be met in the entire chain from the beginning to the end).

3 See *At-Tamhîd* [17/ 338, 339].

4 The Four Imâms are Imâm Abû Hanîfah, Imâm Mâlik, Imâm Ash-Shâfi`i, and Imâm Ahmad.

5 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [21/266].

6 *Janâbah*: A state of major ritual impurity related to sexual discharge.

7 Muslim (536) [2/99].

8 Al-Bukhârî (6954) [12/411] and Muslim (1536) [2/99].

9 At-Tirmidhî (961) [3/293].

10 Al-Bukhârî (1614) [3/627] and Muslim (2991) [4/444].

11 Al-Bukhârî (294) [1/519] and Muslim (2910) [4/381].

12 Ahmad (627) [1/101], Abû Dâwûd (229) [1/114], At-Tirmidhî (146) [1/673], An-Nasâ'î (266) [1/158] and Ibn Mâjah (594) [1/331].

13 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [26/ 179].

14 Muslim (824) [2/390].

15 Abû Dâwûd (232) [1/116], Ibn Khuzaymah (1327) [2/284] and Ibn Mâjah (645) [1/358].

16 Al-Bukhârî (974) [2/597] and Muslim (2051) [3/418].

Etiquette of Answering Call of Nature

It will not escape you, my dear reader - may Allah grant you, me and all Muslims success - that Islam is a perfect, unique, integral religion. There is nothing required for our worldly and religious lives that is not clearly pointed out in Islam. Even the etiquette to be observed upon answering the call of nature is pointed out, so that man - whom Allah has honored over animals - becomes distinguished from animals in this concern with such proprieties. Islam is the religion of cleanliness and purity. Therefore, there are Islamic etiquettes to be observed on entering the bathroom, while answering the call of nature, and on leaving it.

Upon entering the bathroom, it is desirable for a Muslim to say, *"In the Name of Allah, I seek refuge with Allah from all offensive and wicked things (evil deeds and evil spirits)"* stepping in with his left leg. When leaving, it is desirable to step out with the right leg invoking, *"I seek Your forgiveness. Praise be to Allah, Who removed harm from me and gave me health."*

This is because the right (hand or leg) is used for whatever is related to honor and beautification, whereas the left is used for whatever is related to removing impurities and the like.

In case one has to answer the call of nature out of doors, (at a place not prepared for that purpose), it is desirable for one to do so away from people, screening oneself behind a wall, a tree, or the like. In addition, while answering the call of nature out of doors, one is prohibited to face or turn one's back towards the *qiblah*[1 2]. Rather, one should move eastward or westward to avoid facing or turning one's back towards the *qiblah*, as the Prophet (PBUH) has forbidden both to be done while answering the call of nature. On the other hand, one must be cautious of splashing one's urine least it might soil one's body or clothes. Hence, one is recommended to select a smooth ground when having to urinate out of doors, so as to avoid being soiled by the scatter of one's urine.

Besides, while answering the call of nature, it is impermissible for one to touch one's stool and urine exits with one's right hand. It is also impermissible to answer the call of nature at a public road or at a place used by people as a shelter, or in a source of water used by people. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) has forbidden doing so,[3] as such deeds cause harm to people.

On the other hand, one should never enter a bath while having something (like a paper, a document, or anything else) containing the Name of Allah, Exalted and Ever-Majestic be He, or any Qur'anic verses. If one fears that one may lose them (that paper or document) when they are left outside the bath until one finishes, it is permissible for one to enter the bath while having them, provided that they are covered.

Moreover, one is not allowed to speak while answering the call of nature, because it is mentioned in a *hadîth* that Allah hates such a deed[4]. One is also prohibited to recite the Qur'ân in a bath or while answering the call of nature.

When one finishes answering the call of nature, one must perform *istinjâ'*,[5] *istijmâr*,[6] or their substitutes. In fact, it is better to combine both *istinjâ'* and *istijmâr* when cleaning one's stool and urine exits following defecation or urination, yet performing either is sufficient. During *istijmâr*, one should clean one's stool and urine exits with stones or what may substitute for them, such as a coarse paper, a rag, or the like, ensuring the cleanness and dryness of the stool and urine exits; one must clean them thrice or more, if necessary. It is impermissible to perform *istijmâr* using bones or dung, because the Prophet (PBUH) has forbidden that[7]. One should also remove any trace of impurity and dry it; least any impurity remains on one's stool and urine exits, or soils one's clothes or other parts of the body.

Some *faqîhs* (scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence) maintain that *istinjâ'* or *istijmâr* is one of the conditions of the validity of ablution that must be performed before it (in case of answering the call of nature). According to this opinion, ablution is invalid if it is performed without being preceded by *istinjâ'* or *istijmâr* after answering the call of nature. This ruling is based on a *hadîth* narrated on the authority of Al-Miqdâd stating:

"One should wash one's penis and then perform ablution."[8]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Imâm An-Nawawî states that it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to perform *istinjâ'* before ablution, so as to avoid any controversy or suspicion, and to ensure the validity of one's ablution.

Therefore, one must purify oneself from urine, as negligence in this regard is one of the reasons for the torture in the grave. To illustrate, Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

"Purify yourselves from urine for most of the punishment in the grave is because of it."[9]

Gentle reader, you should be aware that the perfection of purification leads to the easiness and perfection of performing acts of worship, and the full abidance by their integral parts. Imâm Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated on the authority of one of the Prophet's Companions that when he (PBUH) was leading the people in the *Subh* (Morning) Prayer and reciting the Sura of *Ar-Rûm* (the *Byzantines*),[10] he was not certain about what he recited. So, when he (PBUH) finished prayer, he said:

"The Qur'ân becomes dubious to us because some of you perform prayer with us without performing ablution properly, so whoever witnesses the prayer with us should perform ablution properly."[11]

Allah has also praised the people of Qubâ' Mosque because of the perfection of their purification, saying:

"... Within it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves." (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 108)

Al-Bazzâr related that when those people of Qubâ' were asked about the way they purify themselves, they replied saying, *"We use water after using stones."* (i.e., they perform *istijmâr* followed by *istinjâ'*)[12].

In this connection, it might be worth mentioning that some people mistakenly believe that *istinjâ'* is an integral part of ablution. They think that one has to start with *istinjâ'* whenever one desires to perform ablution, even if one has previously performed it (i.e. *istinjâ'*) after answering the call of nature. This is completely wrong; *istinjâ'* is not part of ablution, but it is just one of its requirements – as previously mentioned – and is performed only after answering the call of nature. Thus, one does not have to perform it unnecessarily before ablution, without a reason such as answering the call of nature and the impurity of one's stool and urine exits.

To sum up, we would like to state that our religion, Islam, is the religion of purity and cleanliness; the religion of the best standards of behavior and the noblest of manners. It stresses and clarifies whatever issues Muslims may need, and whatever principles that may rectify their lives. There is nothing that benefits Muslims unless it is stated, stressed and enjoined in Islam, so praise be to Allah for all His graces. We invoke Allah to make us steadfast in establishing and observing this great religion, grasping its rulings, abiding by its teachings, faithfully, sincerely and devoutly, so that Allah may accept our good deeds.

Endnotes

1 The *qiblah*: The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka`bah.
2 Al-Bukhârî (144) [1/322] and Muslim (608) [2/148].
3 Abû Dâwûd (26) [1/27] and Ibn Mâjah (328) [1/208].
4 Ahmad (11296) [3/45], Abû Dâwûd (15) [1/23] and Ibn Mâjah (342) [1/215].
5 *Istinjâ'*: Cleaning one's stool and urine exits after defecation or urination with water.
6 *Istijmâr*: Cleaning one's stool and urine exits after defecation or urination with stones or what may substitute for them.
7 Muslim (605) [2/144] and (607) [2/148].
8 Al-Bukhârî (269) [1/492] and Muslim (693) [2/203].
9 This *hadith* was narrated by Ad-Dâraqutni, and Al-Hâfiz states that its chain of transmission is authentic, and there are witnesses to the incident of this *hadith*, and that its origin is stated in the Two *Sahihs* (the Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim). Ad-Dâraqutni (458) [1/136], Al-Bukhârî (218) [1/420] and Muslim (675) [2/191].
10 Chapter No. 30 of the Qur'ân.
11 Ahmad (15855) [3/616].
12 Ibn Mâjah (355) and (357) [1/222, 224]. See also *Nasb Ar-Râyah* [1/218-219].

Siwâk (Tooth-Stick) and Acts of Natural Disposition

`Â'ishah, Mother of the Believers, (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Siwâk (tooth-stick) is a way of purifying the mouth and satisfying the Lord."*
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth*)[1]

It is reported in the Two *Sahîhs*[2] that Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *"Five (practices) are of the natural disposition: circumcision, istihdâd,*[3] *cutting the moustache short, removing the hair of the armpits, and clipping the nails."*[4]

It is also stated as a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*[5] in the Two *Sahîhs* that Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Cut the moustaches short and leave the beard grow."*[6]

Due to the aforesaid *hadîths* as well as other related *hadîths* stressing the same points, *faqîhs* (scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence) derived some rulings among which is the preference of using *siwâk*, which is a kind of stick used in brushing the teeth and gum in order to remove yellowness and undesirable smell.

It is stated that using *siwâk* is one of the practices of Allah's messengers[7]; Prophet Abraham (PBUH) was the first to use *siwâk*. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has pointed out that *siwâk* is a means of "purifying the mouth," i.e. it is a mouth cleaner that removes bad odor and the like. He (PBUH) has also stated that *siwâk* is a way of "satisfying the Lord," i.e. using *siwâk* is an act that pleases and satisfies the Lord, Blessed and Exalted be He.

There are more than one hundred *hadîths* stressing the desirability of using *siwâk*. This indicates that using *siwâk* is a stressed act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) enjoined and made desirable by the Lawgiver of *Sharî`ah*[8]. *iwâk* has great benefits and virtues, the greatest and most comprehensive of which is that stated in the following *hadîth*:

> *"Siwâk is a way of purifying the mouth and satisfying the Lord."*

Brushing the teeth with *siwâk* is to be done with a soft tooth-stick of an *arâk* or olive tree, with a dry date-stalk, or with suchlike tooth-stick that does not crumble or hurt the mouth. Moreover, using *siwâk* is an act of the *Sunnah* to be observed at all times, even when one is in a state of fasting, according to the sound opinion in this regard, and it is a stressed act of the *Sunnah* at specific times. To illustrate, using *siwâk* is stressed when performing ablution, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"But for my fear that it would be hard for my followers, I would have ordered them to use siwâk on every performance of ablution."*[9]

Thus, during ablution, *siwâk* is to be used when rinsing one's mouth with water to ensure the purity and cleanness of the mouth.

Using *siwâk* is also a stressed act of the *Sunnah* to be observed when standing for prayer, whether it is an obligatory prayer or a supererogatory one. This is because we are commanded upon any act of worship to be in a perfect state of spiritual and physical purity befitting the honor and glory of worshipping Allah. Moreover, using *siwâk* is also stressed on whenever the smell of the mouth changes due to eating or the like. Furthermore, using *siwâk* is a stressed act of the *Sunnah* to be observed upon reciting the Ever-Glorious Qur'ân, so as to clean and purify the mouth to be worthy of reciting the Words of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He.

The way *siwâk* is used is by rubbing the gum and teeth starting from the right side of the mouth (and then moving towards the left), and one should hold *siwak* with the left hand.

Among the merits presented by Islam, the True Religion, are the acts of natural disposition mentioned in the aforesaid *hadîth*. They are called the acts of natural disposition as they are observed by those who adhere to innate, natural acts of purity upon which Allah has created all His servants, urged them to observe them, and desired such acts to be observed by them. Allah, Glory be to Him, desires such acts of natural disposition to be observed by His servants so that they attain the most perfect, honorable, dignified qualities, and combine the best appearance with the best manners. These acts of natural disposition are the old, inherent acts and practices of purification observed by all prophets and unanimously agreed upon by all Heavenly Laws. These acts are:

1- ***Istihdâd*:** *Istihdâd* means shaving the pubic hair. This act, in Arabic, is called '*istihdâd*' because it is derived from the word '*hadîd*', i.e. the razor used for shaving hair. Removing such hair is a way of beautification as well as purification. Also, one is free either to remove it by shaving or anything else.

2- **Circumcision:** It is the removal of the loose foreskin covering a male's penis. It is preferable to be done during childhood, as the wound would heal faster, and in order to let the child grow in the healthiest way. Among the numerous virtues of circumcision is to purify the organ from the impurities caused by the foreskin.

3- **Cutting the moustache short:** Cutting the moustache too short is a way of beautification, purification, and avoidance of imitating the polytheists. There are many *hadîths* stressing the act of cutting the moustache too short as well as growing the beard and beautifying it, as the beard is a sign of mannish beauty and is among the features of manhood. Ironically, many people reversed this matter; they would leave their moustaches and shave their beards, cut them short, or depilate parts of them. This is regarded as excessiveness in contradicting the acts of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), as well as an imitation of the enemies of Allah and His Messenger (i.e. the polytheists and the disbelievers). In addition, shaving the beard and growing the moustache is also a way of abandoning the features of manhood and gallantry, and adopting those of women and low men. Such a meaning is what the poet intended when he composed:

Man at times of moral affliction
May see what is ugly as perfection.

Another poet says:

No wonder that women have masculinized
But men feminized is the real wonder.

4- **Clipping the nails:** Clipping the nails is among the qualities of natural disposition, as it is a way of beautification, a means of removing dirt beneath the fingernails, and avoiding being just like beasts. Unfortunately, this act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) is being violated by some reckless youth and light-headed women, as they leave their nails without clipping, out of blind imitation of the polytheists and contradicting, by this, the honorable Prophetic Tradition.

5- **Removing the hair of the armpits:** This is also among the acts of natural disposition. It can be done through plucking, shaving, etc., as a way of purification, and getting rid of the increasing bad odor associated with the presence of such hair.

Those acts, dear gentle reader, are enjoined in the religion of Islam, due to the beautification, purification, and cleanliness they involve. Therefore, Muslims who adhere to such acts would attain the most favorable and perfect appearance, manner, and condition, contrary to the path of the polytheists and their practices. Such practices are also enjoined in Islam as a means of

Endnotes

1 Ahmad (24196) [6/57] and (7) [1/5], An-Nasâ'î (5) [1/17], Ibn Mâjah (289) [1/186], Al-Bukhârî [4/202].
2 The Two *Sahihs*: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
3 Istihdâd: Shaving the pubic hair.
4 Al-Bukhârî (5889) [10/412] and Muslim (597) [2/140].
5 *Marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* is whatever word, deed, approval or attribute which is traced directly back to the Prophet (PBUH) with a connected or disconnected chain of transmission.
6 Al-Bukhârî (5893) [10/431] and Muslim (599) [2/142].
7 Ahmad (23470) [5/421] and At-Tirmidhî (1081) [3/391].
8 The Lawgiver of *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law) is Allah, Exalted be He; the term can also refer to the Prophet (PBUH) as he never ordained but what was revealed to him by Allah.
9 Ahmad (9910) [2/607] and (10676); see also Al-Bukhârî (7240) [13/276] and Muslim (588) [2/135].

Ablution

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

This verse states that performing ablution whenever rising to prayer is obligatory, and tells us which organs should be washed and those which should be wiped during ablution, and specifies what part of them should be washed or wiped. Then, the Prophet (PBUH), through his sayings (*hadîths*) and practices, has clearly shown the way ablution is to be performed.

Every Muslim should know that ablution has certain conditions, obligatory acts, and practices of the *Sunnah* to be observed while performing it. Both conditions and obligatory acts must be fulfilled as much as possible in order to

ensure the validity of ablution. As for the acts of the *Sunnah* related to ablution, they are considered complementary practices that guarantee the perfection of ablution. Observing these acts of the *Sunnah* during ablution increases one's reward, yet abandoning them does not affect the validity of ablution.

The Conditions of Ablution

There are eight conditions of ablution:

1- Being a Muslim

2- Being mentally sound

3- Having discretion

4- Having the intention of performing ablution

According to the aforementioned four conditions, ablution is invalid if performed by a disbeliever, an insane person, a young child who does not distinguish (between right and wrong), or one who does not have the intention of ablution (upon performing it), such as performing it as a way of refreshment in a hot weather, or as a means of cleaning one's body organs or removing certain impurities or the like.

5- Using pure water: Water used for performing ablution must be pure, so impure water is inadequate for performing ablution.

6- Using legally-obtained water: If the water used for ablution is unlawfully acquired, or taken by force, ablution will not be valid.

7- Being preceded by *istinjâ'* or *istijmâr* (when necessary as previously mentioned).

8- Removing what may prevent water from reaching skin of the ablution organs: That is, the one performing ablution has to remove anything covering the organs of ablution, such as mud, dough, wax, accumulated dirt, thick paint, etc., in order to allow water to reach the skin of the organ directly without hindrance.

The Obligatory Acts of Ablution

There are six obligatory acts, related to the organs of ablution:

1-Washing the whole face: Washing the whole face involves rinsing the mouth and the nose with water. Accordingly, one's ablution is void if one washes one's face without rinsing 'both' the mouth and the nose

with water. This is because the mouth and the nose belong to the face, and Allah, Exalted be He, says (regarding ablution), *"...Wash your faces..."* (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6) Thus, Allah commands washing the whole face during ablution, so whoever disregards washing any part of the face is considered to be disobedient to the Command of Allah, Exalted be He. Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) used to rinse his mouth and nose with water while performing ablution.

2-Washing the forearms including the elbows: Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"...And your forearms to the elbows..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6), i.e. washing them including the elbows, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do according to a *hadîth* narrated in this regard[1]. It is also stated in another *hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) *"...washed his hands (during ablution) until he reached the upper arms."*[2] This indicates that the elbows are included when washing the arms during ablution.

3-Wiping over the whole head: Wiping over the head includes the ears, for Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"...And wipe over your heads..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6) Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said, *"The ears are treated as part of the head."* (Related by Ibn Mâjah, Ad-Dâraqutnî, and other compilers of *Hadîth*)[3] Therefore, it is incorrect to abandon wiping over the ears, for it is insufficient to wipe over one part of the head and neglect another during ablution.

4-Washing the feet including the ankles: During ablution, the feet must be washed including the ankles, for Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"...And wash your feet to the ankles..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6) Here, the preposition 'to' means 'with' according to the *hadîths* pointing out how ablution is performed, and through which it is stated that the whole feet must be washed 'including' the ankles.

5-Sequence: The decreed sequence has to be observed while performing ablution. To clarify, one begins with washing the face, followed by the hands, then wipes over the head, and finally washes the feet, as clearly shown in the verse; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

The Prophet (PBUH) used to follow that order while performing ablution, saying:

"This is an ablution without which Allah does not accept any prayer."[4]

This is as related by Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth*.

6-Succession: This means to wash the organs successively without any interval between washing two organs, i.e. the organs must be washed successively without pause, as much as possible.

These are the obligatory acts of ablution that must be fulfilled as commanded by Allah in His Ever-Glorious Book, the Qur'ân.

Scholars disagree concerning the ruling on *tasmiyah*[5] upon starting ablution; they differ whether it is an act of the *Sunnah* or an obligatory practice of ablution. At any rate, according to all Muslim scholars, it is permissible to start ablution with *tasmiyah* and it should not be abandoned.

The reason – Allah knows best – behind specifying those four organs for ablution (i.e. the face, hands, head, and the feet) may be because they are the commonest bodily parts related to sins, so their physical purification may be an indication of spiritual purification (from the sins committed by them). The Prophet (PBUH) has stated that whenever a Muslim washes one of these organs (during ablution), the misdeeds committed through it are remitted, and that such misdeeds fall and vanish with the flow of the water used for washing that organ, until the last drop of it. In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) enjoined saying the Two Testifications of Faith following washing these organs (i.e. following ablution) as a sign of combining both physical and spiritual purity. The physical purity is achieved through washing those organs in the way prescribed by Allah in His Ever-Glorious Book, the Qur'ân. As for the spiritual purity, it is achieved by uttering the Two Testifications of Faith that purify one from polytheism and disbelief.

In the last part of the aforesaid verse related to ablution, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

Thus, gentle reader, every Muslim has to know that Allah has decreed ablution in order to purify them from sins, and to complete His favor upon

them. Likewise, if you contemplate the opening of the same verse, ***"O you who have believed..."*** you will find that it is a generous, gentle call through which Allah, Glorified be He, addresses those who have faith, as they are the ones who will listen to, obey, abide by and benefit from what Allah says and enjoins. That was why the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No one keeps being in a state of ablution except the believer."*[6]

The Acts of the *Sunnah* to Be Observed during Ablution

Whatever acts done in addition to the above-mentioned obligatory acts of ablution are deemed desirable; he who observes them will be rewarded and there will be no blame upon him who refrains from observing them. Hence, scholars call such acts as the acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed during ablution, or the desirable practices of ablution.

Those acts are as follows:

1- **Using *siwâk* (tooth-stick) during ablution:** The virtues and the way of using *siwâk* have been previously clarified. In particular, *siwâk* is to be used while rinsing the mouth with water during ablution, in order to ensure the cleanness of the mouth and to be ready for worshipping Allah, reciting His Ever-Glorious Book, Qur'ân, and invoking Him, Almighty and Ever-Majestic be He.

2- **Starting ablution with washing the hands three times**, before washing the face, as enjoined in various *hadîths*. This is also because the hands are the means through which one dips out water and washes the other organs, so washing the hands is regarded as insurance and a prerequisite for the purity of all the other parts of ablution.

3- **Starting with rinsing the mouth and the nose** before washing the face, as stated in various *hadîths*. When one is not in a state of fasting, one should rinse them inside and out (making water spread all through the mouth, and sniffing water when rinsing the nose).

4- **Inserting one's wet fingers into one's (thick) beard**, ensuring that water reaches all its parts, and washing one's fingers and toes well, especially between them.

5- **Starting with the right organs before the left** (as in washing the hands and the feet).

6- Washing the face, hands and feet up to three times instead of once.

Thus, we have tackled the conditions, the obligatory acts, and the acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed during ablution. So, you, gentle reader, should learn them, and keep observing them whenever you perform ablution to ensure the legal perfection and validity of your ablution as well as the reward for it.

We ask Allah to grant us all more beneficial knowledge and guide us to the righteous deeds.

Endnotes

1 Ad-Dâraqutnî (268) [1/86] and Al-Bayhaqî (256) [1/93].
2 Muslim (246).
3 Abû Dâwûd (134) [1/72], At-Tirmidhî (37) [1/53], Ibn Mâjah (444) [1/262] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (353) [1/108].
4 Ibn Mâjah (419) [1/250], Abû Ya`lâ (5598) and Ad-Dâraqutnî (257) [1/83].
5 *Tasmiyah*: Saying "*Bismillâh*" (i.e. In the Name of Allah).
6 Ahmad (22429) [5/355] and Ibn Mâjah (278) [1/178].

Way of Performing Ablution

Since you are now acquainted with the conditions, the obligatory acts, and the acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed during ablution, then you are aware of the proper way ablution is performed, which is an application of the above-mentioned rulings. Put differently, the perfect way of performing ablution is achieved by observing these conditions, obligatory acts, and acts of the *Sunnah*, which are derived from the texts of *Sharî`ah* (Islamic Law). So, every Muslim has to spare no effort in observing them once he knew them, Allah willing.

The Way of Performing Ablution

1-Intention: To intend performing ablution for the acts of worship for which ablution is required, such as prayer and the like

2-Tasmiyah: To say "*Bismillâh*" (i.e. In the Name of Allah)

3-To wash the hands three times

4-To rinse the mouth three times and then to rinse the nose three times (by sniffing water and then blowing it out using the left hand)

5-To wash the face three times, from the upper part of the forehead (the beginning of the normal hairline) to the lower parts of the jaws lengthwise, and from one ear to the other widthwise (without washing the ears, as they are treated as part of the head, not the face, as previously mentioned). The beard, as well, must be washed; if the hair of the beard is not thick, one has to wash it internally and externally. But if it is thick, it has to be washed from the outside, and it is desirable to insert wet fingers washing it internally, as mentioned above.

6-To wash the hands up to the elbows three times; each hand is to be washed from the upper parts of the fingers and nails to the beginning of the upper arm. Moreover, one has to remove whatever sticks to the hands or the fingernails (such as dough, mud or thick paint) before washing them, so as to allow water to reach such parts.

7-To wipe over the whole head only once, including the ears, with wet hands (provided the water used for wiping over them is fresh one, unlike that remaining from washing hands). The proper way of wiping over the head is to be by putting one's wet hands on the upper part of the forehead and let them pass backwards till they reach one's nape, then return them forwards to the starting point. After that, one is to insert one's two wet forefingers in the holes of the ears while wiping over their outer parts with one's two thumbs.

8-To wash the feet three times including the ankles. As for one whose hand or foot is amputated, such one is to wash what is left of the arm or the feet. To clarify, if the arm is amputated from the joint of the elbow, one is to wash the front part of the upper arm, and if the foot is amputated from ankles, one is to wash the tip of the (amputated) leg; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able ..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Similarly, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"If I command you to do something, then do (of) it as much as you can."[1]

Accordingly, if a person washes what is left of an amputated limb, it will be sufficient as one thus does what one can.

9- **After finishing performing ablution,** in accordance with the above stated form, one may raise one's sight towards the heaven and invoke Allah with some of the invocations of the Prophet (PBUH) in this regard, such as saying:

"I testify that there is no deity but Allah, Alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His Servant and His Messenger. O Allah! Make me among those who are constantly repentant, and make me among those who purify themselves,"[2]

Or Saying:

"Exalted are You, O Allah, and all praise be to You. I testify that there is no deity but You. I ask You for forgiveness and turn to You in repentance."[3]

The reason behind mentioning *dhikr*[4] and invocation following ablution is to combine both physical and spiritual purity, for ablution is a means of physical purity, whereas *dhikr* and invocation (implying monotheism and repentance) are signs of spiritual purity. In this way, one becomes in the most perfect state of purity (combining both physical and spiritual purity), and becomes pure enough to be admitted to stand before Allah (in prayer), imploring Him humbly and submissively.

By the way, it is all right to dry ones organs with a towel or the like after ablution.

Every Muslim has to know that ablution should be performed perfectly, ensuring that water reaches all parts of the organs washed during ablution, without negligence. To illustrate, when the Prophet (PBUH) saw a man who had left a spot on his foot, as small as a fingernail, unwashed (after ablution), he (PBUH) said to him, *"Go back and perform ablution well."*[5] Moreover, some of the Prophet's Companions reported that when the Prophet (PBUH) saw a man offering prayer while there was on the back of his foot a small part equal to the space of a dirham (an Arab coin) which was not washed, i.e. water did not reach it, he (PBUH) commanded him to re-perform both ablution and prayer[6]. In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Woe to the heels (if not washed during ablution) from the Fire!"[7]

This is because one might be so reluctant concerning washing them that one washes them carelessly and water can hardly reach one's ankles during ablution and some spots remain unwashed, which causes them to be tortured in the Hellfire. Furthermore, in the *hadîth* related by Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"The prayer of any of you is not complete until he performs ablution perfectly, as Allah, Exalted be He, has ordered him. He should wash his face and hands up to the elbows, wipe over his head and (wash) his feet up to the ankles..."[8]

However, Muslims should know that the perfection of ablution is not to use a lot of water, but it means to let water reach all parts of the organ being washed. In fact, mere over-use of water is regarded as prohibited wastefulness of water. Also, one may pour water wastefully during ablution without performing it perfectly; the perfection of ablution with little water is exactly what is legally enjoined. It is stated in the Two Sahîhs that the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform ablution with one *mudd*[9] and to take a bath with one *sâ*[10] up to five *mudds*[11].

The Prophet (PBUH) also forbade wastefulness of water; once he (PBUH) passed by Sa`d while the latter was performing ablution and said to him:

"Why are you wasting all this water?" Sa`d said, "Is there wastefulness even in performing ablution?" The Prophet (PBUH) replied, "Yes, even if you were performing it from a river of running water."

This *hadîth* was related by Ahmad and Ibn Mâjah, and supported by other narrations[12]. The Prophet (PBUH) also stated that there would be some people of the Muslim nation who would exceed the limits in purification, i.e. who would purify themselves excessively, wastefully and having unsubstantiated doubt[13].He (PBUH) also said:

"There is a demon of ablution called Al-Walhân, so be on your guard against insinuation in ablution."[14]

Excessiveness in pouring water, which is considered wastefulness, leads to other illegal, detestable consequences, such as:

Incomplete purification: One may depend on using water in abundance during ablution and so does not make sure that water reaches all parts of the organs. Consequently, some spots may remain unwashed while one is unaware. Hence, one's ablution becomes incomplete and thus one performs prayer without purification.

Excessiveness in worship: Ablution is an act of worship, and if any act of worship is excessively performed, it becomes void.

Insinuation in purification: One may get insinuation and be doubtful concerning purification due to excessiveness in using water while performing ablution.

In fact, the best way to avoid the aforesaid consequences is to follow in the Prophet's footsteps and abide by his *Sunnah*, for the most evil of (religious) matters are those newly innovated. May Allah guide us all to that which He likes and to what pleases Him.

To sum up, you have, dear gentle reader, to be keen to ensure that your ablution and all the other acts of worship are legally and perfectly observed, with neither excessiveness nor negligence, for both extremes are dispraised, and moderation is the best of all matters. Negligence in acts of worship makes them imperfect, and excessiveness makes them subject to religious innovations; following the example of the Prophet (PBUH) and abiding by his *Sunnah* is the optimum way to perform acts of worship with due perfection. O Allah, make us know what is right and guide us to follow it, make us know what is wrong and guide us to avoid it, and do not make things obscure for us, lest we may go astray.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (7288) [13/308] and Muslim (6066) [8/108].
2 At-Tirmidhî (55) [1/77], Muslim (552) [2/112], Abû Dâwûd (169) [1/89], An-Nasâ'î (148) [1/100] and Ibn Mâjah (470) [1/273].
3 See Ibnus-Sunnî's *'Amal Al-Yawm wal-Laylah,* p.21.
4 *Dhikr*: Invocations implying remembrance of and mentioning Allah.
5 Muslim (575) [2/126].
6 Abû Dâwûd (175) [1/92].
7 Al-Bukhârî (165) [1/350], (60) [1/189], and Muslim (572) [2/125], (569) [2/123].
8 Abû Dâwûd (858) [1/376], An-Nasâ'î (1135) [1/574], Ibn Mâjah (460) [1/268]; see also At-Tirmidhî (302) [2/101].
9 *Mudd*: A standard measure that equals 543 grams.
10 *S̲â`*: A standard measure that equals 2172 grams.
11 Al-Bukhârî (201) [1/398] and Muslim (735) [2/233].
12 Ah̲mad (7062) [2/291] and Ibn Mâjah (425) [1/254].
13 Ah̲mad (16778) [4/123] and Abû Dâwûd (96) [1/59].
14 At-Tirmidhî (57) [1/84] and Ibn Mâjah (421) [1/252].

Wiping over the *Khuffs*[1]

Islam is a religion of easiness and simplicity, not difficulty and strictness; it decrees suitable rulings for each case, which ensure fulfilling legal purposes and duties with no difficulty.

This applies to the rulings on ablution decreed by Allah. To illustrate, sometimes there is something covering the organs washed during ablution which is hard to remove and maybe needed as a means of protection, either for the feet (such as *khuffs* and the like), or for the head (such as turbans and the like), or for protecting wounds or the like (such as splints, bandages, etc. It is deemed permissible for the one performing ablution to just wipe over such coverings instead of removing them and washing what is underneath. This is the easiness made by Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, for His servants, relieving them from difficulty and strictness.

As for the permissibility of wiping over the *khuffs* (and their likes, such as socks) during ablution, instead of removing them and washing underneath, it

is stated in many *mutawâtir*,[2] *sa<u>h</u>î<u>h</u>*[3] *<u>h</u>adîths* that the Prophet (PBUH) used to wipe over them whether at home or on a journey; he (PBUH) enjoined doing the same.

As regards the legal proofs of the permissibility of wiping over the *khuffs*, **Al-<u>H</u>asan** said, *"I was told by seventy of the Companions of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) that he used to wipe over his khuffs (with his wet hands during ablution)."*[4] Moreover, **An-Nawawî** said, *"The permissibility of wiping over the khuffs was reported by innumerable Companions."* **Imâm A<u>h</u>mad** also said,*"There is not a shadow of doubt in my mind concerning the legality of wiping over the khuffs, as there are forty <u>h</u>adîths of the Prophet (PBUH) indicating its permissibility."*[5] In addition, **Ibnul-Mubârak** and others stated that there was no disagreement among the Companions concerning the permissibility of wiping over the *khuffs* during ablution[6]. Likewise, **Ibnul-Mundhir** and others reported the scholars' consensus on the permissibility of such an act during ablution[7]. In addition, the Adherents of the *Sunnah* and Muslim Community unanimously agree on its permissibility, unlike those innovators in religion who do not deem it permissible.

Wiping over the *Khuffs* during Ablution

This act is permitted and observing it is better than taking off the *khuffs* and washing the feet, as the former is a sign of making use of the legal permission made by Allah, Almighty and Ever-Majestic be He, following the example of the Prophet (PBUH), and contradicting the religious innovators. Wiping over the *khuffs* is a spiritual removal of the impurities underneath. Also, the Prophet (PBUH) never changed the condition of his feet to perform ablution; if he (PBUH) was wearing two *khuffs*, he used to wipe over them, and if not, he used to wash his feet. Therefore, it is impermissible to put on *khuffs* just before ablution in order to wipe over them while performing ablution.

The Duration of the Validity of Wiping over the *Khuffs* without Taking Them off

It is permissible for a resident (i.e. not a traveler) to keep wearing *khuffs* and wipe over them during ablution for a period of one day and night. As for a traveler whose journey legally allows shortening prayer (i.e. when the destination is far enough), the period of permissibility is three days and nights, according to the *<u>h</u>adîth* related by Imâm Muslim, which states that the Prophet (PBUH) specified three days (during which one can wipe over his *khuffs*) for

a traveler and one day and night for a resident[8]. For both (the resident and the traveler), the period of permissibility (of wiping over the *khuffs*) starts from the time of being in a state of ritual impurity (caused by passing urine, stool or wind) after wearing the *khuffs*, as ritual impurity necessitates ablution (for prayer). Still, some scholars view that the duration begins from the first ablution after being in a state of ritual impurity.

The Conditions of Wiping over the *Khuffs*, the Socks, and the Like

1- To be in a state of ritual purity (i.e. a state of ablution) upon wearing them, for it is stated in the Two Sahîhs[9] and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said to the one who wanted to help him (i.e. the Prophet) in taking his *khuffs* off to perform ablution:

"Leave them as I had put them after performing ablution."[10]

It is also narrated that Safwân Ibn `Assâl said:

"We are commanded (by the Prophet) to wipe over the khuffs if we put them on while being in a state of ritual purity (i.e. after performing ablution)."[11]

Thus, it is quite obvious that the ruling is dependent on being in a state of ritual purity when putting the *khuffs* on, so if one is in a state of ritual impurity when putting them on, it is impermissible for one to wipe over them.

2- The *khuffs* must be lawfully acquired, gotten, and made. To clarify, if they are taken by force, or made of silk (for men), it is impermissible to wipe over them during ablution. In a word, a legal permission is not applied to what is already illegal.

3- The *khuffs* and their likes must completely cover the feet up to the ankles. One cannot wipe over them unless they are thick enough and covering the parts of the feet which are to be washed. Thus, if they are too short to cover the feet up to the ankles, or are not thick enough to conceal underneath, it is impermissible to wipe over them.

Since it is permissible to wipe over the *khuffs*, it is permissible to wipe over any foot coverings, such as socks made of wool or suchlike material, which are thick enough to cover underneath. That is due to the fact that the Prophet (PBUH) wiped over his socks and his shoes while performing ablution, as

stated in the *hadîth* related by Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth*, and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by At-Tirmidhî[12]. Wiping over such things during ablution is valid until the legal period of permission ends regardless of the frequency of taking them off and putting them on.

As regards the turban, it is permissible to wipe over it on two conditions. The first is that the turban must be covering the area of the head which is traditionally covered. The second condition is that the turban must be wrapped round the lower jaw up to the head, one or more than one turn, or to be with a back tail. It is stated in many *hadîths* related by more than one of the Imâms that the Prophet (PBUH) wiped over his turban during ablution. To illustrate, `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"He who is not purified by wiping over the turban (i.e. does not deem it sufficient for wiping over the head), then may Allah not purify him."*

It is worth mentioning that it is permissible to wipe over the *khuffs* and turbans only in case of purification from the state of minor ritual impurity, but not major ritual impurity (e.g. *janâbah*); one has to take off one's *khuffs* and turban and wash underneath in the latter case.

As for splints, bandages, and the like, it is permissible to wipe over them during ablution (without removing them). Moreover, one is permitted to wipe over plasters that cover wounds; all such coverings are permitted to be wiped over provided they cover only the injured area or the necessary parts which need to be covered for treatment. However, if the splint, the bandage, or the like, covers more than the injured area unnecessarily, the unnecessary parts must be removed. In addition, it is permissible to wipe over splints in both states of ritual impurity (minor and major ritual impurity), and there is no fixed period for the permissibility of wiping over them. In other words, it is permissible to wipe over the splint until it is removed or the broken limb heals. In a nutshell, the permissibility of wiping over the splint during purification is dependent on the necessity of the cover.

The proof of the permissibility of wiping over the splint is the following *hadîth* narrated by Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him); he reported:

> *"Once, we were on a journey and one of us was injured in his head by a stone. Then that man had a wet dream, so he asked his companions saying, 'Is it permissible for me to perform tayammum*

(dry ablution with clean earth)?' They answered him saying, 'We do not see any legal permission for you as you are able to use water.' So, the man had a ritual bath after which he died. When we came to Allah's Messenger (PBUH), we told him about this. He (PBUH) said, 'They killed him; may Allah kill them! Why did they not ask when being ignorant, for inquiry is the cure for ignorance? It would have been sufficient for him to perform tayammum (instead of ablution) and to bandage his wound with a piece of cloth over and then to wipe over it (the piece of cloth).' "

(Related by Abû Dâwûd and Ibn Mâjah, and deemed sahîh (authentic) by Ibnus-Sakan)[13]

The Areas to Be Wiped over

Wiping is to be applied to the upper part of the *khuffs* or the socks. As for the turban, most of it should be wiped over, especially its folds. However, the splint has to be wholly wiped over.

The Way Wiping over the *Khuffs* is Performed

Wiping over the *khuffs* (during ablution) is to be by passing one's wet fingers from one's toes towards one's leg. The right foot is to be wiped over with the right hand, and vice versa. Also, one should open one's fingers during wiping, and should not repeat wiping. May Allah guide us all to useful knowledge and righteous deeds.

Endnotes

1 *Khuffs*: Leather socks or shoes or their like.
2 *Mutawâtir* (continuously recurrent) *hadîth* is a *hadîth* reported by a large number of narrators whose agreement upon telling a lie is inconceivable (this condition must be met in the entire chain from the beginning to the end).
3 Sahîh (authentic) *hadîth* is a *hadîth* whose chain of transmission has been transmitted by truly pious persons who have been known for their uprightness and exactitude; such a *hadîth* is free from eccentricity and blemish.
4 See Ibnul-Mundhir's *Al-Awsat* [1/430, 433], Az-Zayla`î's *Nasb Ar-Râyah* [1/162], and Ibnul-Mulaqqin's *Al-I`lâm Befawâ'id `Umdat Al-Ahkâm* [1/615].
5 See *Al-I`lâm Befawâ'id `Umdat Al-Ahkâm* [1/615].
6 See *Al-Awsat* [1/434].

7 Ibid.
8 Muslim (637) [2/167].
9 The Two *Sahihs*: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
10 Al-Bukhârî (206) [1/404] and Muslim (630) [2/162].
11 Ahmad (18011) [4/240].
12 Ahmad (18167) [4/343], Abû Dâwûd (159) [1/85], At-Tirmidhî (99) [1/167] and Ibn Mâjah (559) [1/341].
13 Abû Dâwûd (336) [1/172]; see also Abû Dâwûd (337) [1/172] and Ibn Mâjah (572) [1/321].

Things Nullifying Ablution

Given that you have become now aware of how ablution is performed, what its conditions are, and what its obligatory practices and acts of the *Sunnah* are, you need now to know what causes ablution to be nullified. In this way, you will avoid performing an act of worship (such as prayer) while your ablution is null, and so will be the act of worship performed in that state. Every Muslim should know that there are things that nullify ablution and that it becomes completely null if any of them is done; in this case, one has to re-perform ablution to do any act of worship necessitating ablution.

The things nullifying ablution (any of which makes it invalid) are certain matters identified by the Lawgiver[1] to be affecting the validity of ablution.

The Things Nullifying Ablution are of Two Types

1- **Direct nullifiers:** They are the matters that cause the nullification of ablution directly, such as urine, stool, and whatever comes out of the anus and the sexual organ.

2- **Indirect nullifiers:** They are the matters that cause nullification of ablution indirectly, or makes the validity of ablution suspicious. Such matters include unconsciousness or similar states like sleeping, fainting, insanity, etc. The reason is that if one is in a state of unconsciousness, one becomes unable to feel what comes out of one's body or what one does. Thus, doubt in such cases is regarded as an actual nullifying factor.

For more clarification, we can classify the things nullifying ablution as follows:

1) Whatever comes out of the stool and urine exits, such as stool, wind, urine, sperm, pre-seminal fluid, and unusual menstrual blood. Stool and urine are among the direct things nullifying ablution, according to the religious texts and juristic consensus, as when Allah, Exalted be He, revealed the cases that obligate ablution He said:

"*... Or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself...*"
(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

As for sperm and pre-seminal fluid, they nullify ablution according to the sahîh (authentic) hadîths reported in this regard, and the juristic consensus reported by Ibnul-Mundhir and others[2].

As regards *istihâdah*,[3] it nullifies ablution according to the *hadîth* reported by Fâtimah Bint Abû Hubaysh mentioning that she was afflicted with *istihâdah*, and when she asked the Prophet (PBUH) about its ruling, he (PBUH) said to her:

"*Perform ablution and then (you can) offer prayer, for it is (due only to) a vein.*"

This *hadîth* was related by Abû Dâwûd and Ad-Dâraqutnî,[4] who said that all the transmitters of that *hadîth* were trustworthy.

Likewise, breaking wind nullifies ablution according to the sahîh (authentic) *hadîths* narrated in this regard, as well as the juristic consensus. For example, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"*Allah will not accept the prayer of anyone of you if he passes urine, stool or breaks wind until he performs ablution.*"

Also, he (PBUH) said regarding one's uncertainty whether one had broken wind or not:

"One should not leave prayer (to re-perform ablution) unless one hears sound (of breaking wind) or smells something." [5]

As for what comes out of one's body other than urine, stool, and the aforesaid secretions, such as blood, vomit, nosebleed and the like, scholars disagree whether such things nullify ablution or not. Yet, the preponderant opinion is that it does not nullify ablution. However, if one re-performs ablution in this case to avoid such a juristic disagreement, it will be better.

2)Among the things nullifying ablution is mental unconsciousness either due to insanity or due to sleeping, fainting and the like. Thus, the ablution of one in such a state is deemed null, as there is suspicion in this case that something has come out of one's body (such as a drop of urine, wind, or the like) while one is unaware. Still, dozing is regarded as an exceptional case (i.e. it does not nullify ablution) as the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) used to doze while waiting for prayer at the mosque[6]. In a word, only deep sleeping causes the nullification of ablution according to the ample legal proofs.

3) Eating meat of camels, little or much, is also one of the things nullifying ablution, according to the explicit *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) in this regard[7]. **Imâm Ahmad** (may Allah have mercy on him) said that there are two *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîths* ascribed to Allah's Messenger (PBUH) in this connection. Still, eating any lawful meat other than that of camels does not cause ablution to be null.

There are some other issues on which scholars disagree whether they nullify ablution or not, such as touching one's penis, touching a woman lustfully, washing the body of a deceased person, and apostasy. Some scholars view that each of the above-mentioned matters causes the nullification of ablution, while others maintain that it does not. The issue is still controversial and subject to analogical deduction, yet re-performing ablution in such cases so as to avoid that juristic disagreement will be better.

There is still an important issue in this regard that should be clarified, namely the case when one is certain about the validity of one's ablution, then one suspects that any of the things nullifying ablution has taken place; what

should one do in this case? It is stated that the Prophet (PBUH), in the *hadîth* related by Imâm Muslim on the authority of Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), said:

> *"If any one of you feels any flatulence (while being in a state of ablution) and is doubtful whether anything (like wind) has issued from him or not, he should not leave the mosque (to re-perform ablution) unless he hears a sound (of breaking wind) or perceives a smell."*[8]

This honorable *hadîth*, as well as similar ones that state the same meaning, indicates that if one who is certain about one's purity then doubts it, one should deem oneself pure (despite one's suspicion) and act accordingly. This is because the original ruling is that one is still in a state of purity, as purity is certain in this case, and the nullification of ablution here is based on mere suspicion. Thus, certainty is not to be eliminated because of suspicion. This is, in fact, a great generic ruling to be applied in all cases; namely, the original ruling is to remain applicable until otherwise is verified. By contrast, if one is certain about the nullification of one's ablution and suspects its validity, one has to re-perform ablution, as the original case here is one's minor ritual impurity, which is not abrogated due to mere suspicion.

O Muslim reader, you should keep yourself pure and verify your ablution whenever you stand for prayer, and care for the validity of your ablution as much as you can, for prayer without valid ablution is invalid. You should also beware of insinuation and Satan's whispers that cause you to doubt the validity of your ablution, making you in a state of doubt and confusion. Therefore, you should seek refuge with Allah from the evils and pay his insinuations no attention. Moreover, you should ask the people of juristic knowledge about whatever confuses you of the issues of purification and purity, in order to be certain about your purity. You should also care for the purity of your clothes so as to verify the validity of your prayer and the perfection of the acts of worship you perform, for Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 222)

May Allah guide us all to useful knowledge and righteous deeds.

Endnotes

1 The Lawgiver of *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law) is Allah, Exalted be He; the term can also refer to the Prophet (PBUH) as he never ordained but what was revealed to him by Allah.

2 See *Al-Awsat* [1/134].

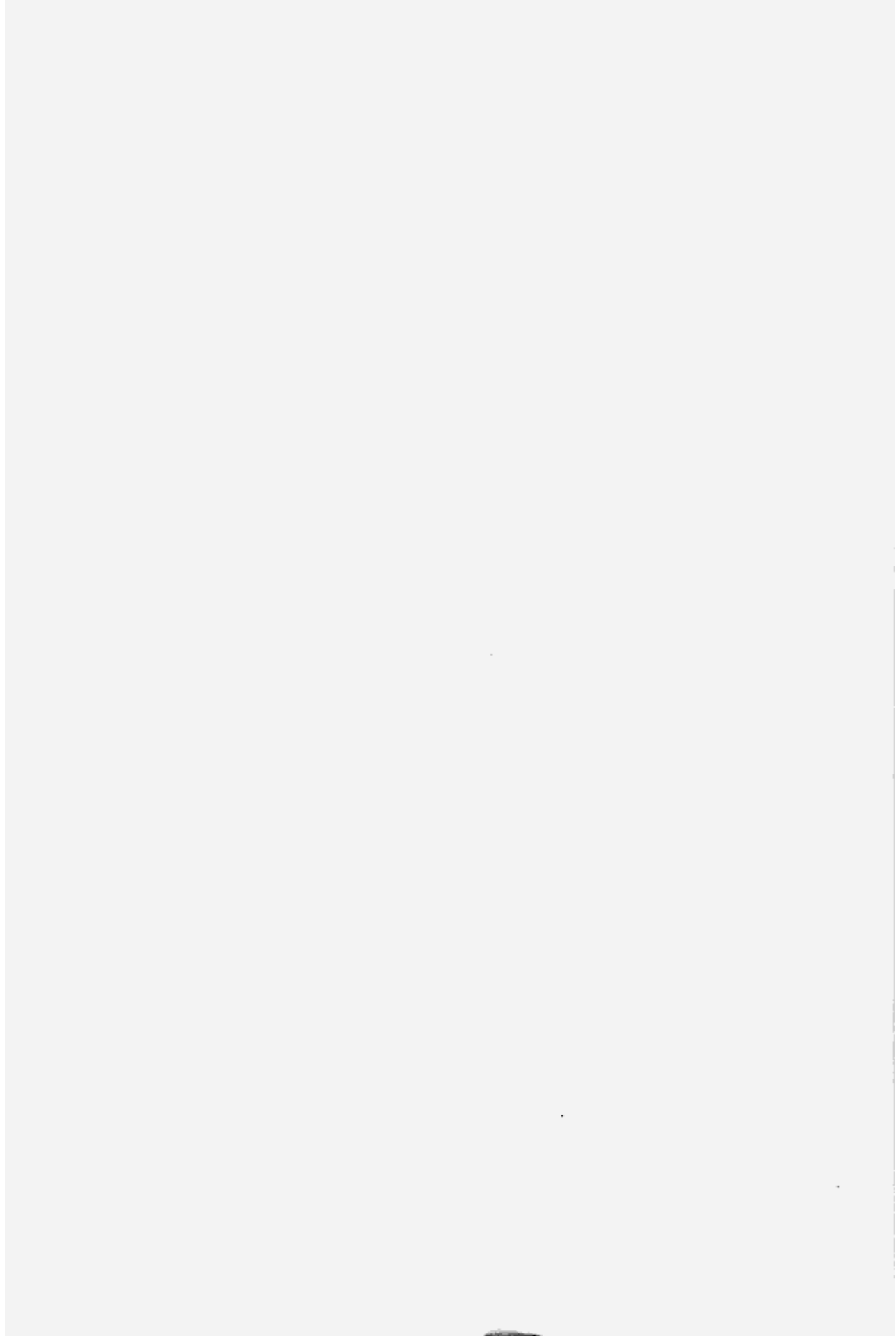
3 *Istihâdah*: Vaginal bleeding other than menstruation.

4 Abû Dâwûd (286) [1/143], An-Nasâ'î (360) [1/203] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (778) [1/213].

5 Al-Bukhârî (137) [1/312] and Muslim (802) [2/272].

6 Muslim (833) [2/296].

7 Muslim (800) [1/271]; see also Ahmad (18495) [4/490], Abû Dâwûd (184) [1/96], At-Tirmidhî (81) [1/122] and Ibn Mâjah (494)[1/283].

8 Muslim (803) [2/272].

Ritual Bathing

You have already been introduced to the rulings on ablution, which is a means of purification from minor ritual impurity (caused by passing wind, excrement or urine), and the things nullifying it. So, the focus is now given to highlighting the rulings on purification from major ritual impurity, be it *janâbah*,[1] menstruation, or postnatal bleeding. This kind of purification is called ritual bathing, during which one washes one's whole body in a specific way on which we will elaborate on below. The legal proof that ritual bathing is obligatory in such cases is that Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And if you are in a state of janâbah, then purify yourselves..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

It is said that ritual bathing from *janâbah* was practiced by the disbelievers during the *Jâhiliyyah* (Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance), and it was among the remaining teachings of the religion revealed to Prophet Ibrâhîm (Abraham) (PBUH).

There are six cases in which performing a ritual bath is obligatory for a Muslim:

Ejaculation by a man or a woman, being awake or asleep, provided that it is associated with sexual pleasure in case of wakefulness. If not, owing to an illness or inability to control it, then a ritual bathing is not obligatory. However, it is absolutely obligatory for one to take a ritual bath if one ejaculates while being asleep, which is called wet dreaming, as one in this case is unconscious and may not feel any pleasure. On the other hand, if one wakes up and finds the traces of ejaculation, it is obligatory for one to take a ritual bath then, but if there is no trace of ejaculation, ritual bathing is not obligatory.

Inserting a man's penis into a woman's vulva, even if without ejaculation, as it is stated in a *hadîth* related by Imâm Muslim that the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"When anyone sits amidst four parts (of the woman) and the circumcised parts (of the genitals) touch each other, a ritual bath becomes obligatory (for both)."[2]

Thus, sexual intercourse, even if without ejaculation, obligates ritual bathing for both the man and the woman according to the aforesaid *hadîth* as well as the consensus of Muslim scholars.

Embracing Islam; when a disbeliever embraces Islam, for the Prophet (PBUH) commanded some of the new converts to Islam to perform ritual bathing following declaring their Islam[3]. However, many scholars view that it is desirable, not obligatory, for a new convert to take a ritual bath as the Prophet (PBUH) has never been reported to have commanded every new convert to do so. So, the ruling here is that it is regarded as desirable according to reconciliation between the various legal proofs in this regard; and Allah knows best.

Death is the fourth case that necessitates ritual bathing (i.e. washing the body of the deceased) except for martyrs (see rulings on funerals).

Menstruation and postnatal bleeding are the fifth and the sixth cases in which ritual bathing is obligatory (for women), for the Prophet (PBUH) said to a woman:

"So, when your menstruation period begins, give up performing prayer, and when it ends, wash off the blood (i.e. take a ritual bath) and then perform prayer."[4]

Moreover, Allah commands men not to approach their wives in case they are in a state of menstruation until ***"... they have purified themselves..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 222), i.e. through ritual bathing following the menstrual period.

The Way a Complete Ritual Bath is Taken

- **Having the intention to take a ritual bath**
- **Beginning with tasmiyah**[5]
- **Washing one's hands thrice**
- **Washing one's genital**
- **Performing full ablution**
- **Washing one's head;** pouring water over the head thrice so that it thoroughly reaches one's scalp
- **Pouring water over one's whole body and** rubbing it with one's hands, making sure that water reaches all parts of the body

The menstruating or the woman in a state of postnatal bleeding **has to undo her hair braids or pigtails when taking a ritual bath.** However, a woman in a state of *janâbah* does not have to undo her hair braids to have a ritual bath, as it does not affect the validity of her ritual bathing in this case. This is because *janâbah* is a frequent state, and undoing hair braids every now and then might cause her difficulty. Still, it is obligatory for a woman in that state (of *janâbah*) to make water reach her scalp.

In general, it is obligatory for one performing ritual bathing, a man or a woman, to ensure that water thoroughly reaches one's scalp, and to wash the hidden body parts well, such as the skin of the neck, the skin of the armpits, the navel, and the back parts of the knees. Moreover, if one wears a ring, a wristwatch, or the like, one has to move it to let water reach underneath. Thus, one has to perform ritual bathing so perfectly, verifying that there is not a single body part but water has reached, for the Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadîth* related by Abû Dâwûd and At-Tirmidhî:

"There is janâbah under every single hair, so wash the hair well and cleanse the skin."[6]

Moreover, one should by no means use water wastefully while taking a ritual bath. Rather, one should use little water provided ritual bathing is performed properly and perfectly as prescribed in *Sharî`ah*. Muslims should follow the example of the Prophet (PBUH) and rationalize their use of water during purification, for he (PBUH) used to perform ablution with one *mudd* and to take a bath with one *ṣâ`*[7]. Also, it is obligatory for a Muslim to screen himself while taking a bath for it is impermissible to take a bath naked while being seen by people, as stated in the *ḥadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"Verily, Allah is Modest and He likes modesty and veiling, so when anyone of you takes a bath, he should screen himself (so as not to be seen by others)."*
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and An-Nasâ'i)[8].

Taking a ritual bath to purify oneself from the state of major ritual impurity is one of the trusts between a servant and his Lord, so one should be keen on fulfilling this obligation properly and observing its rulings carefully, so as to perform it legally and perfectly. If one is uncertain about any of the rulings on ritual bathing, one should consult scholars; shyness should never prevent one from doing so, for Allah Himself (as stated in the Qur'ân) is not shy of the truth. If shyness prevents a Muslim from asking about his religious affairs, it is then regarded as a condemned kind of shyness and cowardice whispered by Satan to keep him away from learning the religious rulings necessary for him and fulfilling the obligations of his religion perfectly.

Purity is a serious issue, and being negligent regarding it is a grave legal mistake, for it is a condition of the correctness of prayer which is the pillar of Islam. We ask Allah to bestow upon us, as well as all Muslims, insight into His religion, and to grant us sincerity in our words and deeds.

Endotes

1 *Janâbah*: A state of major ritual impurity related to sexual discharge.
2 Muslim (783) [3/265]; see also Al-Bukhârî (291) [1/512] and Muslim (781) [2/261].
3 Abû Dâwûd (355) [1/180], At-Tirmidhî (604) [2/502] and An-Nasâ'î (188) [1/118].
4 Al-Bukhârî (228) and Muslim (333).
5 *Tasmiyah*: Saying "*Bismillâh*" (i.e. In the Name of Allah).
6 Abû Dâwûd (248) [1/126], At-Tirmidhî (10) [1/178] and Ibn Mâjah (597) [1/332].
7 Al-Bukhârî (201) and Muslim (325).
8 Ahmad (17935) [4/306], Abû Dâwûd (4012) [4/196] and An-Nasâ'î (404) [1/218].

Tayammum[1] (Dry Ablution)

Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, has decreed purification for prayer from both states of minor and major ritual impurity by using pure water, which He sends down from the sky. Purification with water (when being in either states of ritual impurity) is obligatory for a Muslim as long as water is available. However, in some cases, either water is unavailable or one is unable to use it due to a legal excuse, for that Allah, out of His grace and mercy, has kindly provided a substitute for it, namely *tayammum* with clean earth, to make things easy for His servants and to spare them difficulty.

Allah, Exalted be He, in His Precise, Glorious Book, the Qur'ân, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of janâbah, then purify yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving***

himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful." (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

Linguistically, the word '*tayammum*' in Arabic means intention, and legally (according to the Islamic rules) it means wiping over the face and hands with clean earth in a specific way. *Tayammum* is stated in the Noble Qur'ân, prescribed in the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), and approved by consensus. *Tayammum* is a privilege which Allah, out of His grace and mercy, has specified for the purity of the nation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in order to make things easy for them. In the Two *Sahîhs*, it is related that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"I have been granted (by Allah) five (things) which were not granted to anyone else before me (and they are) (1) Allah made me victorious by awe (by His frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey. (2) The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a masjid (a mosque or a clean place for prayer) and a means of purification, so anyone of my followers can pray anywhere whenever the time of a prayer is due..."[2]

Tayammum is a substitute for purification with water in case one is legally unable to use it. Purification with *tayammum* also enables a Muslim to perform all the acts of worship that require ablution with water, such as prayer, *tawâf* (circumambulating the Ka`bah), reciting the Noble Qur'ân, etc. This is because *tayammum* has been decreed by Allah as a legal substitute for purification with water. The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

"...And its clean earth has been made (by Allah) as a purifying means for us..."[3]

The Cases in which *Tayammum* Substitutes for Purification with Water

1- **Unavailability of water;** when one finds no water, whether one is at home or on a journey; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"... And do not find water, then seek clean earth ..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

2- **Availability of water but insufficient;** when the available water is enough only for drinking, cooking, and such necessities, and purification with water might cause it to run out when it is needed to quench the thirst of one, one's family, people, animals, etc.

3- **Probability of harm;** when purification with water might cause harm due to an illness, or cause the delay of one's recovery, or the like, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...But if you are ill... then seek clean earth..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

4- **Inability to use water due to illness;** when one is unable to use water due to an illness that prevents one from moving to get water and there is nobody to help him perform ablution, so one fears to miss performing prayer at its due time.

5- **The fear of catching cold;** when one fears the harm of catching cold if one purifies oneself with water, provided one is unable to heat it, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And do not kill yourselves [or one another]..."

(Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 29)

In any of the aforementioned cases, one can perform *tayammum* (instead of ablution with water) and offer prayer. In addition, if water is enough only to wash some of the organs of ablution, one can use it and then perform *tayammum* for the rest of the organs; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Moreover, if there is a wound that hurts if it is washed or wiped over, one can perform *tayammum* for that wound, and continue performing ordinary ablution (with water) for the rest of the organs, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"... And do not kill yourselves [or one another]..."

(Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 29)

However, if wiping over the bandage of the wound with water does not hurt or cause any harm, it is sufficient for one to wipe over that bandage instead of wiping over it with clean earth (i.e. *tayammum*).

It is permissible to perform *tayammum* with clean earth, saline earth, sand, and suchlike pure earthy stuff, according to the preponderant of the two juristic opinions in this regard, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...Then seek clean earth..." (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 6)

When it was time for prayer, the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions used to perform *tayammum* wherever they performed prayer (when water was unavailable), using earth or anything of the kind; they never took clean earth with them everywhere to use it (for performing *tayammum*) in case they did not find water.

How to Perform *Tayammum*

When performing *tayammum*, one strikes the earth with one's hands while parting one's fingers. Then one wipes over one's face with the palm of one's hands, and wipes over the hands with the palms of one's hands, provided both the face and the hands are wholly wiped over. It is permissible to strike the earth twice, wiping over the face after the first strike and over the hands after the other. However, the former way of performing *tayammum* is the one authentically narrated to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH)[4].

Things Nullifying *Tayammum*

- Whatever minor ritual impurity nullifies ablution (such as stool, urine, wind, etc.) nullifies *tayammum*.
- Whatever major ritual impurity necessitates ritual bathing (such as *janâbah*, menstruation, and postanal bleeding) nullifies *tayammum*. The ruling here is that the substitute act (i.e. *tayammum*) takes the same rulings on the original act (i.e. ablution and ritual bathing).
- When water is found (in case *tayammum* is performed because of lack of water)
- When there is no longer a legal excuse such as illness and the like.

If one finds neither water nor earth, or is unable to use either, it is permissible for one then to perform prayer with neither ablution nor *tayammum*, for Allah "does not charge a soul except with that within its capacity"; one also is not legally required to re-perform such a prayer for one, thus, (by adopting easiness) acts in accordance with Allah's Commands, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Furthermore, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"If I command you to do something, then do of it as much as you can."[5]

Thus, we have explained to you, gentle reader, a summary of the rulings on *tayammum*, and if you are doubtful about any of them or any other rulings, you have urgently to consult men of religious knowledge; you should never neglect any religious issues, especially those related to prayer, the pillar of Islam, for the issue is really serious.

May Allah guide us all to felicity and righteousness regarding our words and deeds, making our righteous deeds sincerely done for His Sake, and in devotion to His Honorable Face! May Allah grant our invocation, for He is verily the Hearing and Responsive!

Endnotes

1 *Tayammum*: Performing dry ablution with clean earth (when water is unavailable or one cannot use it).
2 Al-Bukhârî (335) [1/565] and Muslim (1163) [3/6].
3 Muslim (1165) [3/7].
4 Al-Bukhârî (338) [1/574] and Muslim (818) [2/284].
5 Al-Bukhârî (7288) [13/308] and Muslim (6066) [8/108].

Removal of Impurity

As a Muslim is legally required to be pure from minor and major ritual impurities in order to perform prayer, he is also commanded to purify his body, clothes and remove any spot of impurity. Allah says:

"And your clothing purify." (Qur'ân: Al-Muddaththir: 4)

The Prophet (PBUH) commanded a woman to wash the menstrual blood from her garment[1]. With this in mind, it is our duty to shed more light on this issue, namely the removal of impurity, illustrating the most important related rulings, hoping that it may benefit Muslims. *Faqîhs* (may Allah have mercy on them) used to specify a separate chapter in their volumes entitled "A Chapter on the Removal of Impurity" i.e. the removal of the impurities that afflict pure objects, such as clothes, utensils, sheets, floors, etc. Water is the basic means used for the removal of impurity, as it is the original means of purification, as described by Allah Who says:

> *"... And sent down upon you from the sky, rain by which to purify you..."* (Qur'ân: Al-Anfâl: 11)

Kinds of Impure Objects That Must be Removed

Impurity may be linked to the ground, the floor, or what is connected to them, such as walls, water basins, rocks, etc. In such a case, it is sufficient to remove such impurity by washing it only once, i.e. to pour water once until it covers the impure object, as the Prophet (PBUH) ordered to pour a bucket of water over the urine of the Bedouin who had urinated in the mosque[2]. Such an impurity is naturally removed when covered with rainwater or floods. So long as the impure object is removed by pouring water, or by rainwater or floods, it is sufficient to deem the area concerned pure. On the other hand, impurity may not be related to the ground, the floor, or what is connected to them, such as **the impurity caused by dogs, swine, or what is related to them.** In this case, the impure object must be washed seven times, one of them with earth, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When a dog licks a utensil belonging to anyone of you, let him wash it seven times, the first of them with earth."*[3]
>
> (Related by Muslim and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

Still, this ruling is not restricted to utensils; it is also applicable to clothes, sheets, and the like. If the impure object is related to neither dogs nor swine, such as **urine, stool, blood, and the like**, it has to be washed, rubbed, and wrung out until it is completely removed, leaving neither sign nor color.

In general, things washed can be divided into three categories:

1. Squeezable things such as clothes, so they must be wrung out after washing.
2. Unsqueezable things such as leather and the like, so they have to be overturned during washing.
3. Things that can neither be wrung out nor overturned; such things have to be washed, scrubbed and then pressed with a heavy object until most of their water dries.

When the filthy area on one's body, clothes, a small place of prayer, or the like, cannot be located, the whole suspected area has to be washed until it is certain that impurity has been removed. Still, if the impure area itself cannot be identified, the whole object has to be washed.

As for a pure material soiled with urine of an infant, it is sufficient to purify it with sprinkling water, not washing it, as stated in the *hadîth* narrated on the authority of Umm Qays Bint Mihsan (may Allah be pleased with her). She narrated:

> *"I brought my baby son (who had not started eating ordinary food then) to Allah's Messenger (PBUH) who took him and made him sit in his lap. The child urinated on the garment of the Prophet (PBUH), so he (PBUH) asked for water and sprinkled it over the soiled area without washing it."*[4]

However, if the child is old enough to eat ordinary food, the ruling on his/her urine is regarded as that of grown-ups. In such cases, urine is to be removed by washing as in the case of other kinds of impurity.

There are three kinds of impure objects:

- **Major impure objects,** such as those caused by dogs and the like
- **Minor impure objects,** such as the urine of infants (who have not yet started eating ordinary food)
- **Moderate impure objects,** which include all other impure objects.

At this point, there must be distinction between pure and impure urine and manure of animals. Those of legally edible animals, such as camels, cows, sheep and the like, are pure, according to a *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim stating that the Prophet (PBUH) gave permission to the people of `Uraynah to take the urine and milk of the camels of charity as medicine[5]. This *hadîth* implies that the urine of camels is pure, for it is impermissible to take an impure object as medicine. Some may argue that the Prophet permitted taking or drinking such urine as medicine only in case of necessity. To this, we say that the Prophet (PBUH) never enjoined washing the trace of the urine of camels before performing prayer, which shows that he did not deem it impure. It is also stated in a *sahih* (authentic) *hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH), before the Prophet's Mosque was built, would perform prayer at sheepfolds[6] and would command his Companions to perform prayer in such folds,[7] though they had been surely urinated in.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Purity is the original ruling on all kinds of manure except for those which are ruled out..."*[8]

The leftover of legally edible animals is pure and so is the leftover of cats, according to the hadîth narrated on the authority of Abû Qatâdah, who reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said about cats:

> *"It (i.e. a cat) is not impure; it is one of those (male or female domestic animals) which go round among you."*
>
> (Related by At-Tirmidhî, who deems it *sahih* (authentic), and other compilers of *Hadîth*)[9]

In the *hadîth* at hand, the Prophet (PBUH) resembled cats to servants who go round among their masters waiting for their orders. Thus, deeming cats pure as stated in the *hadîth* is a way of relieving Muslims from strictness and difficulty. Some scholars maintain the same ruling on legally inedible animals smaller than cats, such as birds and the like. They view that the leftover of such small animals (or birds) is as pure as that of cats. On the other hand, the manure, urine, and the remaining food of any legally inedible animals other than cats and their likes are impure.

Thus, taking care of physical and moral purity is central in a Muslim's life. Moral purity requires monotheism and devotion to Allah, in both words and deeds. As for physical purity, it includes purifying oneself from major and minor ritual impurities, as well as purification from all kinds of tangible impurities. This is because our religion, Islam, is the religion of purity, cleanness, and purification from both physical and spiritual filthiness. A Muslim must always observe purity and cleanness, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Purification is half of faith."*[10]

So, a Muslim must concern himself with purity and avoid all kinds of impurity; Allah's Messenger (PBUH) has stated that the commonest reason for the torture in the grave is one's being soiled with urine without purifying oneself [11]. Hence, if you are soiled with impurity, you must hasten to purify yourself in order to keep yourself pure, especially when you want to perform prayer. Always check your state of purity, and when you want to enter a mosque, for example, you should check the cleanness of your shoes; if you find something filthy, you have to remove it and clean your shoes, and do not ever enter a mosque with filthy shoes. May Allah guide us all to whatever pleases Him of words and deeds.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (227) [1/430] and Muslim (673) [3/190].
2 Al-Bukhârî (6025) [10/552] and Muslim (657) [2/181].
3 Muslim (649) [2/175]; see also Al-Bukhârî (172) [1/359].
4 Al-Bukhârî (223) [1/425] and Muslim (663) [2/185].
5 Al-Bukhârî (233) [1/436] and Muslim (4329) [6/154].
6 Al-Bukhârî (234) [1/444] and Muslim (1174) [3/11].
7 Muslim (800) [2/271]; see also *Fayd Al-Qadîr* (4/415) and *As-Silsilah Ad-Da'ifah* (2902).
8 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû 'ul-Fatâwâ* (20/339), (21/40, 74, 75, 534, 587, 613) and (25/239). See also *Al-Ikhtiyârât Al-'Ilmiyyah* p.41.
9 Abû Dâwûd (75) [1/49], At-Tirmidhî (92) [1/153], An-Nasâ'î (68) [1/58] and Ibn Mâjah (367) [1/228].
10 Muslim (533) [2/95].
11 Al-Hâkim (657) [1/280] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (460) [1/136].

Menstruation and Postnatal Bleeding

First: Menstruation

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And they ask you about menstruation. Say, 'It is harm, so keep away from wives during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves, then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you. Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.' "*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 222)

Menstruation is the flow of a type of natural blood from the womb at specific times. This blood is habitually discharged every month for six or seven days, and the period can be more or less than that. In other words, a woman's monthly period can be longer or shorter depending on the different nature of each woman as predetermined by Allah.

Rulings Stated in the Noble Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* Concerning Menstruation

It is prohibited for a menstruating woman either to perform prayer or observe fasting, as the Prophet (PBUH) said to Fâṭimah Bint Abû Hubaysh:

> *"Give up prayer when your menstrual period begins."*[1]

Thus, the prayer and fasting of a menstruating woman are deemed invalid, as the Prophet (PBUH) has prohibited that,[2] and the Prophet's prohibition means it is invalid to perform what he has prohibited. Therefore, a woman who performs such acts of worship in that state of impurity is considered to be disobedient to Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).

When the menstrual period is over, a woman has to make up for the missed days of fasting according to the juristic consensus, without making up for the prayers she has missed. `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

> *"When we menstruated during the life of Allah's Messenger (PBUH), we used to be commanded (by Allah's Messenger) to make up for the missed days of fasting, but we were not ordered to make up for the missed prayers."*[3]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

It is impermissible for a menstruating woman to make *ṭawâf* (circumambulating the Ka`bah), to recite the Noble Qur'ân, or to stay in a mosque. In addition, it is prohibited for her husband to have sexual intercourse with her until her period is over and she takes a ritual bath. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And they ask you about menstruation. Say, 'It is harm, so keep away from wives during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves, then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 222)

The phrase ***"...keep away from wives during menstruation"*** means not to have sexual intercourse with them within that period. The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

> *"You can do everything (with your wives during menstruation) except sexual intercourse (or 'copulation,' as in another version)."*[4]
>
> (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth* except Al-Bukhârî)

It is permissible for the husband of a menstruating woman to enjoy her by kissing, touching, and the like, except for having sexual intercourse with her.

It is impermissible for the husband of a menstruating woman to divorce her before her menstrual period is over, as Allah says:

> ***"O Prophet, when you [Muslims] divorce women, divorce them at [the commencement of] their waiting period..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: At-Talâq: 1)

That is, when they become pure (from menstruation, sexual intercourse, etc.). Also, the Prophet (PBUH) ordered a man who had divorced his wife during her menstrual period to take her back and to divorce her (if he insisted) when her period was over.

Once the menstrual blood stops discharging, a woman becomes pure and her menstrual period is deemed over. She must then take a ritual bath, after which she is allowed to do whatever acts of worship which were prohibited for her during menstruation. After blood stops discharging, a woman does not have to be concerned about any secretion or yellowish discharge, as indicated in the *hadîth* narrated on the authority of Umm `Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said:

> *"We never considered yellowish discharge as a thing of importance (as menstruation)."*

This *hadîth* is related by Al-Bukhârî and other compilers of *Hadîth*,[5] and it is deemed a *marfû`* (Traceable) *hadîth*, for the Prophet (PBUH) has approved of its content.

N.B.

If the discharge of a woman in a state of menstruation or postnatal bleeding stops before sunset, it is obligatory for her to perform both the *Zuhr* (Noon) and the *`Asr* (Afternoon) Prayers of the same day, and if the discharge stops before dawn, it is obligatory for her to perform both the *Maghrib* (Sunset) and the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayers of the same night. This is because the time of prayer for the latter is a permissible time of prayer for the former in case of a legal excuse. **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:**

> *"So, the majority of scholars, such as Mâlik, Ash-Shâfi`î, and Ahmad view that if a menstruating woman's discharge stops at the end of daytime, it is obligatory for her to combine performing both the Zuhr and the `Asr Prayers of the same day, and if the discharge stops at the end of the night, it is obligatory for her to combine performing both the*

Maghrib and `Ishâ' Prayers of the same night. This is because there is a legal common specified time for every two successive prayers to be combined due to a legal excuse. To clarify, if a woman's discharge stops at the end of the day, it is obligatory for her to perform the Zuhr Prayer before the `Asr Prayer, for it is still a permissible time to perform the Zuhr Prayer, i.e. she is still at the specified period of the Zuhr Prayer. Likewise, if that was at the end of the night, it is obligatory for her to perform the Maghrib and the `Ishâ' Prayers, as she is still at the specified time of the Maghrib Prayer. This ruling was narrated on the authority of `Abdur-Rahmân, Abû Hurayrah, and Ibn `Abbâs."[6]

If a woman starts discharging before she can perform an obligatory prayer at its specific time, the preponderant opinion is that she is not required to make up for such a prayer after her discharge stops. In this respect, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"The opinion of the Hanafî and Mâlikî Schools is the most cogent, as they maintain that a woman is not required to make up for such a missed prayer after her discharge stops. This is because making up for such a prayer necessitates a new legal command, and there is none in this case. Her delay of prayer is based on a legal excuse, so she is not to blame, as the delay is not out of negligence. If a Muslim oversleeps or forgets to perform a prayer at its due time, though it is not out of negligence, the time of prayer starts for him when he gets up or remembers, and thus his prayer is not considered a way of making up for a missed one."[7]

Second: *Istihâdah*

Istihâdah is an irregular vaginal bleeding other than menstruation, caused by a vein called in Arabic 'Al-`Âdhil'. The case of *mustahâdah*[8] is so confusing, for the blood of menstruation resembles that of *Istihâdah*. The question here is: Since the *mustahâdah* is legally considered pure, how can she distinguish between menstruation and bleeding of *istihâdah* when her bleeding continues all the time? How can she distinguish then between menstruation and *istihâdah*, bearing in mind that she is legally and ritually deemed pure in the latter case?

In fact, there are three cases of the *mustahâdah*:

1- When a woman used to have a stable, regular menstrual period (i.e. having certain duration of menstrual period) before she had *istihâdah*. In such a case, a woman can distinguish between both states relying on her stable menstrual period, (i.e. the bleeding that contradicts the duration of her menstrual period is regarded as that of *istihâdah)*. Thus, such a woman can wait until her usual period ends, then deem any other bleeding as *istihâdah*, as the Prophet (PBUH) said to Umm Habîbah in this regard:

   "Remain away (from prayer) equal (to the length of time) that your menstrual period used to prevent you. After that (after the period of usual courses), bathe yourself and perform prayer."

   (Related by Imâm Muslim)[9]

   Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said to Fâtimah Bint Abû Hubaysh:

   "This (i.e. istihâdah) is from a blood vein, not (usual) menstruation. So, when your real menstrual period begins, give up performing prayer."

   (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[10]

2- When a woman does not have a regular menstrual period, but her bleeding is always distinguishable; sometimes she bleeds malodorous, thick, and black blood (i.e. having the characteristics of menstruation blood), and some other times she bleeds red blood which is neither thick nor malodorous. Such a woman is to consider the former kind of blood as that of her menstrual period, during which she gives up prayer and fasting, regards the other kind of blood as that of *istihâdah*, the period in which she can perform prayer and observe fasting, for she is considered ritually pure in this case. The Prophet (PBUH) said to Fâtimah Bint Abû Hubaysh:

   "When the menstruation blood comes, it is black blood that can be recognized. So, when that comes, give up performing prayer, but when a different type of blood comes, you can perform ablution and perform prayer..."

   This *hadîth* is related by Abû Dâwûd and An-Nasâ'î, and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by Ibn Hibbân and Al-Hâkim[11]. It states that the ruling depends on the judgment and the recognition of the woman herself.

3-When a woman has neither a regular menstrual period nor a distinguishable kind of blood (e.g., the perplexed woman). Such a woman must follow the prevalent womanly menstrual period (i.e. average of six or seven days a month) and deem whatever discharge after this period as *istihâdah*; the Prophet (PBUH) said to Hamnah Bint Jahsh:

"This (i.e. istihâdah) is a strike (i.e. harm) caused by Satan, so you should count six or seven days for menstruation, then you should take a ritual bath. If you see that you have purified yourself, then perform prayer for twenty four or twenty three days and fast for this will be sufficient for you. So, you should do as women do during their menstrual period."

This *hadîth* is related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth*,[12] and deemed sahîh (authentic) by At-Tirmidhî[13].

To sum up, we can say:

- A woman with a stable, regular menstrual period distinguishes *istihâdah* according to her habit.
- A woman with a distinguishable blood depends on her own judgment and her ability to distinguish between her menstruation and *istihâdah*.
- A woman that has neither (a regular period nor distinguishable blood) is to consider six or seven days a month and then take a ritual path.

These aforementioned rulings combine the three rules stated by the Prophet (PBUH) concerning a woman in a state of *istihâdah*.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"There are six distinctive features between menstruation and istihâdah. ***The first*** *is the regular, stable menstrual period, which is the most cogent, reliable distinctive sign (between menstruation and istihâdah), as any discharge other than that of menstruation is regarded as istihâdah.* ***The second*** *is the distinguishable blood; the malodorous, thick, and black blood is considered with greater reason as menstruation blood, rather than the red one.* ***The third*** *distinction is to follow the prevalent womanly menstrual period, as the original juristic rule is that the ruling on the individual follows that on the majority. These three cases are stated in the Sunnah and by means of legal consideration..."*[14]

Then he (**Ibn Taymiyah**) mentioned the remaining three cases and in his conclusion he said:

> *"... The most valid opinion is to abide by the first (three) cases as they were stated in the Sunnah, and to reject the others."*[15]

Obligatory Acts to be Observed by a *Mustahâdah* in Case She is Deemed Ritually Pure

1) She has to take a ritual bath when her estimated period for menstruation ends, as mentioned above.

2) She has to wash her vulva upon every performance of prayer, put a piece of cotton or the like in there to prevent bleeding, tie it well so as not to fall, and perform ablution for every prayer. About a woman in a state of *istihâdah*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

   "She should give up prayer during her menstrual period, after which she should take a bath and then she can perform prayer."

This *hadîth* is related by Abû Dâwûd, Ibn Mâjah and At-Tirmidhî; the latter maintains that it is a *hasan* (good) *hadîth*[16][17]. The Prophet (PBUH) also said about a *mustahâdah*:

> *"I advise you to use cotton (to stuff the vagina with it,) for it absorbs the blood."*[18]

Women also can use the sanitary napkins available nowadays.

Third: Postnatal Bleeding

The ruling on a woman in a state of postanatal bleeding is like that of a menstruating one concerning the permissibility of the husband to enjoy her without sexual intercourse. They also have the same rulings regarding the prohibition of sexual intercourse, observing Fast, performing prayer, divorce, performing *tawâf*,[19] reciting the Noble Qur'ân, and staying in a mosque. Moreover, the rulings on both cases are the same regarding the obligation of taking a ritual bath when bleeding stops, and making up for the missed days of Fast, but not the missed prayers, just like the menstruating women.

The womb of a woman in a state of postnatal bleeding discharges blood during and after giving birth, and this is the blood accumulated during pregnancy. The maximum period of postanatal bleeding is forty days, according to the majority of scholars. **At-Tirmidhî** states:

"People of religious knowledge among the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) and their successors uniformly agree that a woman in a state of postnatal bleeding must give up prayer for forty days unless her bleeding stops before that; in this case, she has to take a ritual bath and perform prayer."[20]

So, if the bleeding of a woman in a state of postanatal bleeding stops before the fortieth day, her period of postnatal bleeding ends, and she must have a ritual bath, perform prayer, and practice all acts of worship that have been prohibited for her during her postnatal bleeding period.

If a pregnant woman miscarries and starts discharging, and the stillborn has reached a distinctively recognizable form, she is considered a woman in a state of postnatal bleeding. An embryo takes about eighty-one days to three months in order to have a distinctively recognizable shape. If the embryo is a mere lump of flesh or a clinging clot (without a distinctively recognizable form), the woman is not considered in a state of postnatal bleeding, even if she starts discharging; she is not to give up prayer or fasting, and none of the rulings on postanatal bleeding is applicable in this case.

N.B.

It seems suitable to thoroughly complete our discussion at this point by mentioning that some women may take some kinds of medicine that prevents menstrual bleeding in order to observe fasting in the month of Ramadân, or to perform *Hajj* (Pilgrimage). Such medications are permissible if they prevent blood only for a period of time, not forever. If this medicine prevents menstruation forever, a woman is not permitted to take it without her husband's permission, since her ability to give birth is also prevented as a result of taking this medicine.

Thus, we have briefly highlighted the rulings on menstruation, which needs a much longer time to elaborate on. If a Muslim is confused or in doubt regarding any of the aforementioned rulings, or any other ones, he/she must consult *faqîh*s (scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence), and surely they will find what eliminates their confusion and doubt, Allah willing. We invoke Allah to grant us success.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (331) [1/84] and Muslim (751) [2/241].
2 See Al-Bukhârî (304) [1/526].
3 Al-Bukhârî (321) [1/546] and Muslim (761) [2/251].
4 Muslim (692) [2/202], Ahmad (12339) [3/167], Abû Dâwûd (285) [1/129], At-Tirmidhî (2983) [5/214], An-Nasâ'î (287) [1/167] and Ibn Mâjah (644) [1/357].
5 Al-Bukhârî (326) [1/552], An-Nasâ'î (366) [1/204], Ibn Mâjah (647) [1/359] and Abû Dâwûd (307) [1/155].
6 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [22/76].
7 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [23/335]
8 *Mustahâdah*: A woman in a state of *istihâdah* (i.e. a woman having vaginal bleeding other than menstruation).
9 Muslim (757) [2/249].
10 Al-Bukhârî (228) [1/432] and Muslim (751) [2/241].
11 Abû Dâwûd (286) [1/143], An-Nasâ'î (215) [1/133], Ibn Hibbân (1348) [4/180] and Al-Hâkim (620) [1/268].
12 The Five Compilers of *Hadîth* are Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, At-Tirmidhî, An-Nasâ'î, and Ibn Mâjah.
13 Ahmad (27463) [6/489], Abû Dâwûd (287) [1/144], At-Tirmidhî (128) [1/221] and Ibn Mâjah (622) [1/347]; see also An-Nasâ'î (354) [1/201].
14 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [21/630].
15 *Ibid.*
16 *Hasan* (good) *hadîth* is a *hadîth* whose chain of transmission is linked to the narration of an authority with weak exactitude, and the *hadîth* is free from eccentricity or blemish.
17 Abû Dâwûd (297) [1/151], At-Tirmidhî (126) [1/220] and Ibn Mâjah (625) [1/346].
18 Ahmad (27463) [6/439], Abû Dâwûd (287) [1/144], At-Tirmidhî (128) [1/221] and Ibn Mâjah (622) [1/344].
19 *Tawâf*: Circumambulating the Ka`bah.
20 At-Tirmidhî (1/258).

II:PRARYER

Obligation of the Five Prayers

Prayer is the most obligatory of the Five Pillars of Islam next to the Two Testifications of Faith,[1] and it was ordained in the best and the most perfect way for an act of worship. Prayer includes many of the acts of worship, like the remembrance of Allah, the recitation of the Qur'ân, standing humbly before Almighty Allah, bowing, prostration, supplication, and *takbîr*[2]. Prayer is also the head of the physical acts of worship, of which none of the religions brought by any of Allah's Messengers is void. Prayer, unlike all other acts of worship, was enjoined by Allah on His Messenger, Mu<u>h</u>ammad (PBUH), the Seal of Messengers, on the Night of *Al-Mi`râj* (Mu<u>h</u>ammad's Ascension)[3]. This is an indication of its greatness, a confirmation of its being obligatory, and a sign of its high status in the Sight of Allah. There are many *<u>h</u>adîth*s indicating the virtues of prayer and showing its being obligatory on all Muslim individuals. The fact that prayer is an obligatory act of worship is primarily known in Islam. So, whoever denies this fact is considered to be an apostate; such a person is to be asked to recant, and if he does not, he is to be killed as unanimously agreed upon by Muslim scholars.

Linguistically, prayer means invocation; Allah, Exalted be He, commands the Prophet to 'pray' for the believers, saying:

> ***"...And invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 103)

According to the *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law), prayer is defined as a special kind of sayings and deeds beginning with *takbîr* and ending with *taslîm*[4]. It is called 'prayer' because it includes invocation; during prayer, the worshipper is in a state of invocation through worshipping Allah, praising Him, or supplicating Him for something. This is why it is called 'prayer'. Prayer was decreed by Allah on the Night of *Al-Mi'râj*, before *Hijrah*,[5] as five prayers to be performed everyday and night at specified times by every legally accountable Muslim. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 103)

Those prayer times are the times pointed out by Allah's Messenger (PBUH) through his words or his deeds (i.e. through the *Sunnah*). Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"And they were not commanded except to worship Allah [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Bayyinah: 5)

In addition, in many verses of Allah's Glorious Book (the Qur'ân), Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And establish prayer..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 43)

Allah also says:

> ***"[O Muhammad], tell My servants who have believed to establish prayer..."*** (Qur'ân: Ibrâhîm: 31)

Moreover, Allah, Glorified be He, says:

> ***"So exalted is Allah when you reach the evening and when you reach the morning. And to Him is [due all] praise throughout the heavens and the earth. And [exalted is He] at night and when you are at noon."*** (Qur'ân: Ar-Rûm: 17-18)

Therefore, it is obligatory for whoever reaches one of the specified times of prayer, being adult and sane, to perform it, excluding women in a state of menstruation or postnatal bleeding. Scholars unanimously agree that it

is not obligatory for women in the aforesaid two cases to perform prayer, nor to perform it later after purification. On the other hand, whoever is in a state of unconsciousness, as in sleeping, fainting, and the like, has to perform the prayer(s) he/she has missed when he/she wakes up. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And establish prayer for My remembrance."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Tâhâ: 14)

In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"Whoever misses a prayer out of oversleeping or forgetfulness let him perform it once he remembers it."*[6]

A guardian of a child has to command him to perform prayer when the child reaches the age of seven, though it is still not obligatory for him. But the purpose is to make the child interested in prayer and used to it. Thus, the child and his guardian will be rewarded when the former performs prayer, for Allah, Exalted be He, says in general:

> ***"Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgment] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit]..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-An`âm: 160)

Moreover, when a woman showed the Prophet (PBUH) a young boy who was with her saying:

> *"Does this one have to perform Hajj (Pilgrimage), O Messenger of Allah?" He (PBUH) replied, "Yes, and you will have a reward."*[7]

So, a guardian has to teach his child how to perform prayer and how to perform ablution for it. A guardian has also to beat his child if the latter is ten years old and neglects prayer, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Command your children to perform prayer when they become seven years old, and beat them for (not performing) it (i.e. prayer) when they become ten years old; and arrange their beds (so that boys and girls sleep) separately."*[8]
>
> (Related by Ahmad, At-Tirmidhî, Abû Dâwûd, and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

It is also impermissible to perform prayer later than its due time, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...Indeed prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times." (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 103)

The meaning is that prayer has specified times at which it has to be performed. A prayer is impermissible to be deferred except for those who would like to combine it with the following prayer, provided that the said prayer can be combined with another, and that the case is among those in which combining two prayers is permissible as well as the person being one who is allowed to combine prayers in this way. As for delaying performing a night prayer until the morning, a day prayer until the night, or the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer until sunrise, it is by no means permissible, whether the reason is a state of major ritual impurity, minor ritual impurity, or anything else. Rather, one has to perform them at their specified times, regardless of one's state.

A person might happen to be detained in hospital where he is confined to a bed that he cannot leave to pray, or cannot change the impure clothes he wears, or cannot find pure earth to perform *tayammum* (dry ablution) instead of ablution to pray. Some ignorant people in this case defer prayer on the pretext that they will perform it later when possible. In fact, this is a grave mistake and a means of missing prayer whose reason is unawareness and lack of juristic consultation. What they have to do is to perform prayer at its specified times regardless of their states. Their prayer will be sufficient, even if it is performed without *tayammum* or in impure clothes; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Even if they pray without facing the *qiblah*,[9] provided they are unable to face it, their prayer is still valid.

As regards those who abandon performing prayer out of negligence or slackness, even if without denying the fact that it is obligatory, they are considered disbelievers according to the more valid of the two juristic opinions in this regard. This is what is indicated in the prophetic *hadîth*s, like the one related by Imâm Muslim that states:

"Verily, between man and between polytheism and disbelief is the negligence of prayer."[10]

There are many other legal proofs. Those who abandon prayer are to be pointed out among people so as to be ashamed of themselves and perform prayer. In addition to this, they are to be discarded to the extent that they are not to be greeted and their invitations are not to be accepted until they repent and establish regular prayer. This is because prayer is the basic pillar of religion, and the main difference between a Muslim and a disbeliever. So, whatever good deeds one might do are useless if one is negligent of prayer, we ask Allah for safety.

Endnotes

1 The Two Testifications of Faith: Saying, "I testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."
2 *Takbîr*: Saying, *"Allâhu-Akbar"* (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
3 See Al-Bukhârî (7517) [13/583] and Muslim (409) [384].
4 *Taslîm*: Saying the final *Salâms* in prayer (saying, "*As-salâmu `alaykum wa Rahmatullâh*" i.e. "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah") when concluding prayer.
5 Hijrah: The Prophet's Immigration to Medina.
6 Al-Bukhârî (597) [3/93] and Muslim (1566) [3/198].
7 Muslim (3240) [5/103].
8 Ahmad (6753) [2/248], Abû Dâwûd (495) [1/239], Al-Hâkim (951) [1/378]; see also At-Tirmidhî (407) [2/259], Ibn Khuzaymah (1002) [2/102].
9 The *qiblah*: The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka`bah.
10 Muslim (243) [2/259].

Prayer Call (*Adhân*) and Immediate Prayer Call (*Iqâmah*)

The Five Prayers have specified times, before which it is impermissible to perform them. Many people (at the time of the Prophet) did not know the exact time of prayer, or were so busy that they did not pay attention to the time of prayer. Therefore, Allah decreed the prayer call (*adhân*) to notify them of its due times. The prayer call was decreed in the first year after the Prophet's Immigration to Medina. The reason behind its prescription was that it was difficult for the Muslims then to observe the exact times of prayer. Therefore, they conferred and agreed to have a certain sign to gather them for prayer. Afterwards, the wording of the prayer call was revealed to `Abdullâh Ibn Zayd in a vision, which was confirmed by the Divine Revelation;[1] Allah, Exalted be He, revealed:

> ***"O you who have believed, when [the adhân] is called for the prayer on the day of Jumu`ah [Friday], then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Jumu`ah: 9)

Allah also revealed:

> ***"And when you call to prayer..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 58)

Each of the prayer call (*adhân*) and the immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) has special wording, which express creed and faith. Both of them begin with *takbîr* (saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" i.e. "Allah is the Greatest") which is a sign of glorification of Allah, Almighty and Ever-Majestic be He. Then the Two Testifications of Faith are to be declared,[2] as an acknowledgement of the Oneness of Allah, Exalted and Glorified be He, and the prophethood of our Prophet, Muhammad (PBUH). After that, a call for prayer, the basic pillar of Islam, is pronounced,[3] following which a call for prosperity is pronounced,[4] inviting all Muslims for prayer, the way to felicity and eternal delights. Finally, the wording of the prayer call ends with *takbîr*, which is the best way of the remembrance of Allah, and the word of sincerity of faith, whose greatness and virtues outweigh the seven heavens with all beings therein (excluding Allah) and the seven earths with all beings therein.

There are many *hadîths* stating the great virtues of the prayer call, and indicating that prayer callers (i.e., muezzins) will have the longest necks of all people on the Day of Judgment[5]. Both the prayer call (*adhân*) and the immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) are collective duties,[6] and they are among the apparent Islamic rituals. They are decreed on men, residents or travelers, at each of the five prayer times. The town whose people abandon the prayer call and the immediate prayer call are to be fought, because they are among the manifest Islamic rituals, so it is impermissible to abandon them.

The basic characteristic of a prayer caller is to be a loud-voiced man, so as to be more convenient to call for prayer informing people at its due times. He has also to be an honest man, because he is considered to be an entrusted person, as his calling for prayer decides the times when people pray, fast, and break their fasting. A prayer caller has also to be acquainted with the due times of prayer to call for each prayer once its time is due.

The prayer call consists of fifteen sentences, as it used to be made by Bilâl during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (PBUH). It is desirable to be deliberate while calling for prayer, without lengthening. It is also desirable

to pause after pronouncing each sentence of the prayer call, and to face the *qiblah* while calling, inserting one's index fingers into one's ears. In addition, it is desirable, while calling for prayer, to turn to the right when saying, "*Hayy `alas-Salâh*", i.e. "Come to prayer," and to the left when saying, "*Hayy `alal-Falâh*", i.e. "Come to success!" When calling for the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer, after saying "*Hayy `alal-Falâh*" twice, it is desirable for the prayer caller to call saying, "*As-Salâtu Khayrun minan-Nawm*", i.e. "Prayer is better than sleep," twice. That was commanded by the Prophet (PBUH),[7] as dawn is a time when people are often asleep. It is impermissible for the prayer caller to add any words to the original wording of the prayer call before or after calling, as this is considered to be a *bid`ah* (i.e., a matter innovated in religion). Whatever is pronounced other than the wording of the prayer call approved of by Allah's Messenger (PBUH) is regarded as a prohibited and an innovated act in religion. For example, uttering words of *tasbîh*,[8] chanting, invoking Allah, or conferring Allah's peace and blessings upon the Prophet loudly before or after calling for prayer, all are nothing but *bid`ahs*. These acts are prohibited, and one must express one's disapproval of whoever follows any of them (while calling for prayer).

It is not right to call for a prayer before its due time, because the prayer call is to notify people of the exact time of prayer, but an early prayer call causes confusion instead. Still, it is permissible to call for the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer earlier than its due time, in order to allow people to get ready for prayer (in that late hour). But there must be another prayer call at the exact time of the *Fajr* Prayer, so as to acquaint people with the due time of prayer and fasting (as fasting starts from the *Fajr*).

When listening to the prayer call, it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to repeat what the prayer caller is saying while calling. Also, when the prayer caller calls saying, "*Hayy `alas-Salâh*" (Come to prayer) and "*Hayy `alal-Falâh*" (Come to success), one is to say, "*Lâ Hawla wala Quwwata illâ Billâh*," i.e. "There is neither might nor power but in Allah." Afterwards, when the prayer caller finishes calling for prayer, one is to say:

> *"O Allah, Lord of this perfect call and of this established prayer, grant Muhammad the place of Al-Wasîlah*[9] *and the most virtuous place, and raise him to a praiseworthy position (in Paradise) that you have promised him (of)."*

Following the prayer call, it is prohibited for one to leave the mosque without having a legal excuse or an intention to return soon. In addition, if one

is sitting while the prayer caller is calling for prayer, one should not stand, but one should rather be patient until the prayer caller finishes calling so as not to resemble Satan (who flees when hearing the prayer call). Once a Muslim hears the prayer call, he has to head for the mosque (to offer prayer), leaving all worldly affairs. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"[Such niches are] in houses [i.e. mosques] which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His Name be mentioned [i.e. praised] therein; exalting Him within them in the morning and the evenings - [are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of Zakâh. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turn about..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nûr: 36-37)

The immediate prayer call is in eleven sentences that are uttered quickly. There is no need to be slow in pronouncing them because they are merely addressed for those already present for prayers. It is preferable that the person who calls for prayer is the same one who undertakes the immediate prayer call. He should only perform the latter by permission of the *imâm* (i.e., leader in prayer) who is the one who determines the commencement of the prayer.

Endnotes

1 Abû Dâwûd (499) [1/241], At-Tirmidhî (189) [1/358] and Ibn Mâjah (706) [1/389]; see also Muslim (835) [2/298].

2 Saying, *"Ashhadu allâ ilâha illallâh (twice). Ashhadu anna Muhammadar-Rasûlullâh (twice),"* i.e. *"I testify that there is no deity but Allah (twice). I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (twice)."*

3 Saying, *"Hayy 'alas-Salâh"* (twice), i.e. "Come to prayer."

4 Saying, *"Hayy 'alal-Falâh"*, i.e. "Come to prosperity."

5 Muslim (850) [2/311].

6 Collective duty: A religious duty which if sufficiently fulfilled by some Muslims, the rest will not be accountable for it as an obligation, and it becomes an act of the *Sunnah* for them

7 Abû Dâwûd (500) [1/242], An-Nasâ'î (632) [1/334], At-Tirmidhî (198) [1/378] and Ibn Mâjah (715) [1/396].

8 *Tasbîh*: Saying, *"Subhân-Allâh"* (i.e. Glory be to Allah).

9 *Al-Wasîlah*: It is the greatest and the most superior degree in Paradise reserved for only one of Allah's servants, and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) hopes to be that one. So, he (PBUH) asks everyone of his nation to pray to Allah following each prayer call (*adhân*) to grant him that place, *Al-Wasîlah*.

CHAPTER 3

Prayer Conditions

The conditions of prayer are those on which the validity of prayer depends so long as one is able to fulfill them. Prayer has certain conditions if they, or any of them, are neglected, prayer is nullified. Among those conditions are the following:

The first condition: To be performed at its specified times; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 103)

That is to say, prayer is decreed to be performed at certain times specified by Allah, Glorified be He. Thus, Muslim scholars uniformly agree that prayer has five specified times and it is insufficient to perform a prayer before its due time. The Commander of the Believers, `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"Prayer has specified times stipulated by Allah, without observing which prayer is invalid."*

So, prayer is obligatory on a Muslim once its due time begins, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"Establish prayer at the decline of the sun..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Isrâ': 78)

Moreover, scholars uniformly agree on the great virtues of performing prayer at its specified times in general according to the verse in which Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...So race to [all that is] good..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 148)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

"And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord..."

(Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 133)

Furthermore, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And the foremost, the foremost. Those are the ones brought near [to Allah]." (Qur'ân: Al-Wâqi`ah: 10-11)

In addition, it is related in the Two *Sahîhs* that when the Prophet (PBUH) was asked about the dearest deed in the Sight of Allah, he replied:

"Performing prayers at their specified times."[1]

Further, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 238)

And performing prayer at its specified times is a sign of such care enjoined by Allah.

The obligatory prayers are five ones to be performed daily, and each has a due time of performance specified by Allah so that it suits the life conditions of His servants; that is, times of prayer are specified in a way that does not hinder people from managing their worldly affairs, but helps them manage such affairs. In addition, prayer is a way through which people's sins are forgiven; the Prophet (PBUH) has likened prayer to a river in which a Muslim takes a bath five times a day, so no trace of dirt would be left on him[2].

Those specified times of prayer are as follows:

1- **The *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer:** Its specified time begins when the sun passes its meridian and declines westward, and this is what is indicated in the verse in which Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"Establish prayer at the decline of the sun..." (Qur'ân: Al-Isrâ': 78)

Such a decline of the sun is known when the shadow of an object becomes eastward instead of westward, and this specified time for the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer continues until an object's shadow becomes approximately the same in length as the object itself and ends at this time, for the Prophet (PBUH) said, as related by Imâm Muslim:

"The time of the Zuhr (Noon) Prayer is when the sun passes the meridian and a man's shadow is the same (length) as his height."[3]

It is desirable to hasten performing the *Zuhr* Prayer at the beginning of its specified time unless it is extremely hot, in which case it is desirable to delay performing it until it is cooler, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"In a very hot weather, delay the Zuhr Prayer until it becomes (a bit) cooler, because the severity of heat is from the raging of the Hell-fire."[4]

2- **The `*Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer:** It begins when the time of the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer ends, i.e. when the shadow of an object is of the same length as the object itself, and continues until the sun sets according to the valid of the two juristic opinions in this regard. It is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to hasten performing the `*Asr* Prayer at the beginning of its due time, as it is the Middle Prayer whose virtues are stated by Allah, Exalted be, when He says:

"Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle [i.e. `Asr] prayer..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 238)

It is also stated in the *Sunnah* that it is the `*Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer[5].

3- **The *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer:** The time of the *Maghrib* Prayer begins when the sun sets; i.e. when it completely disappears so that it can by no means be seen, neither from a plane hill nor a mountain. The time of the sunset is known by the coming of the darkness of night from eastward; the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"When night falls from this side and the day vanishes from that side and the sun sets, then the fasting person should break his fast."[6]

The time of the *Maghrib* Prayer lasts until the red twilight ends, and it is an act of the *Sunnah* to hasten performing the *Maghrib* at the beginning of its due time, according to the *hadîth* related and

deemed sahîh (i.e. authentic) by At-Tirmidhî on the authority of Salamah, which states that the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer when the sun disappeared from the horizon[7]. **At-Tirmidhî commented,** *"This is also the opinion of most of the people of religious knowledge of the Prophet's Companions and their followers."*

4- **The '*Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer:** The time specified for this prayer begins when the time of the *Maghrib* Prayer (i.e. the time during which it is performed) ends. Thus, the time of the '*Ishâ'* Prayer begins when the red twilight disappears and continues up to half of the night. This time is divided into two parts; an optional time and an obligatory time. The optional time continues until the third of the night, and the obligatory time begins from the third of the night until the second (real) dawn. It is desirable to delay performing the '*Ishâ'* Prayer until the end of the preferred time for it, which is the third of the night, if possible. Yet, if this might cause difficulty to the Muslims, it is then desirable to hasten performing it at the beginning of its due time so as to avoid difficulty. On the other hand, it is detestable to sleep before the '*Ishâ'* Prayer so as not to oversleep and miss it. Moreover, it is detestable for people to gather and chat following performing the '*Ishâ'* Prayer so that they can sleep early and get up early. So, a Muslim should sleep following performing the '*Ishâ'* Prayer so as to be able to get up early and offer *Tahajjud*[8] and then the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer actively, as the Prophet (PBUH) disliked sleeping before the '*Ishâ'* Prayer and talking after (performing) it[9]. Thus, it is detestable to stay up after the '*Ishâ'* unless one has something useful or urgent to do.

5- **The *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer:** The time of the *Fajr* Prayer begins with the true dawn and lasts until sunrise, and it is desirable to hasten performing it provided that the rise of the true dawn is certain.

These are the specified times of the five obligatory prayers decreed by Allah, so you should, gentle Muslim reader, perform them at their specified times without delay, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So woe to those who pray - [but] who are heedless of their prayer."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ`ûn: 4-5)

That is, woe to those who perform prayer but delay it and do not perform it at its specified times. Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"But there came after them successors [i.e. later generations] who neglected prayer and pursued desires; so they are going to meet evil - except those who repent..."*** (Qur'ân: Maryam: 59-60)

The phrase "neglected prayer" in the above verse means that those people used to neglect observing prayer at its specified times. In brief, Allah refers to those who do not perform prayer at its due times as "heedless" people who "neglect" prayer, and He states that such people will be severely tortured in the Hellfire and that ***"... they are going to meet evil."*** If one forgets performing one of the five obligatory prayers or misses it out of oversleeping, one has to perform it once one remembers or gets up; the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone forgets a prayer or misses it because of sleeping, he should perform it when he remembers it; there is no other expiation for it."*

Thus, it is obligatory to make up for a missed prayer as soon as possible. One should by no means wait to perform a missed prayer with the same prayer on the following day, as mistakenly done by some people. Also, one should not put off performing a missed prayer until such time when its regular time is overdue, but one has to perform it immediately instead.

The second condition (of prayer): To conceal one's *'awrah*[10] while performing prayer, i.e. to screen the parts of the body that have to be covered, as exposing them is offensive or causes one embarrassment; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O children of Adam, take your adornment [i.e. wear your clothing] at every masjid..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A'râf: 31)

"*Masjid*" means a place for prayer or a mosque, so the meaning of the verse is that people have to wear their clothing that conceal their private parts upon each prayer. Moreover, in the *hadîth* related and deemed *hasan* (good) by At-Tirmidhî, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Allah does not accept the prayer of a woman who has reached puberty unless she wears a veil."*[11]

Ibn 'Abdul-Barr said:

> *"Scholars uniformly agree on the invalidity of the prayer of one who refrains from clothing, and performs it naked though able to clothe oneself and conceal one's 'awrah."*

So, it is indisputable that it is obligatory to conceal one's *`awrah* during prayer, in the presence of people, or even while being alone according to the valid opinion implied in the *hadîth* narrated on the authority of Mu`âwiyah Ibn Haydah Al-Qushayrî who reported:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said to me, 'Conceal your `awrah (private parts) except from your wife and from whom your right hands possess (i.e. slave-girls).' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! What (should we do) if the people are assembled together?' He (PBUH) said, 'If it is within your power that no one looks at it (i.e. your `awrah), then let no one look at it.' I then said, 'O Messenger of Allah! What if one is alone (i.e. should one conceal it too)?' He (PBUH) replied, 'Allah is more entitled to be shown bashfulness than people.' "*
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth*)[12]

Allah also refers to exposing *`awrah* as an act of 'immorality' as the unbelievers used to circumambulate the House (i.e. the Ka`bah) while being naked, claiming that it was an act of religion; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And when they commit an immorality, they say, 'We found our fathers doing it and Allah has ordered us to do it.' Say, 'Indeed, Allah does not order immorality...' "*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 28)

In the light of the above, exposing one's *`awrah* and looking at it leads to grave evil and such an act is a means of immorality and debauchery. We see in those dissolute societies nowadays that their honor is lost and their morals are gone due to exposing their *`awrah*, which led to the spread of vice and the disappearance of virtue among them. On the other hand, concealing *`awrah* is a means of maintaining virtue, and this is why Satan is keen to tempt people to expose their *`awrah*. Therefore, Allah warns us against Satan, saying:

> ***"O children of Adam, let not Satan tempt you as he removed your parents from Paradise stripping them of their clothing to show them their private parts..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 27)

So, exposing *`awrah* is a satanic scheme in which many communities are entrapped nowadays, calling it fashion and modernity. As a result, there have become strip clubs, and women have become so dissolute that they expose their bodies before men so shamelessly.

So, you should know, gentle Muslim reader, that `*awrah* (private parts) has to be concealed in a way that makes such parts unnoticeable; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 26)

Thus, concealing one's `*awrah* (private parts) with clothing is a necessary, obligatory act.

A man's `*awrah* is from his navel to his knees, for `Alî Ibn Abû Tâlib narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Do not unveil your thigh, and do not look at the thigh of the living or the dead."*[13]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and Ibn Mâjah)

In another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Cover your thigh for a man's thigh is a part of his `awrah (private parts)."*[14]
>
> (Related by Mâlik, Ahmad, and At-Tirmidhî who deemed it a *hasan* (good) *hadîth*)

In spite of all the above, regrettably, we find that a lot of men nowadays when practicing certain sports expose their bodies and cover only their sexual organs, which is an explicit contradiction to the aforementioned religious texts. Such men have to beware of that, and to abide by the teachings of their religion, refraining from whatever contradicts them.

As for a woman, all her body is considered `*awrah*, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"A woman is (regarded as) `awrah (i.e. she has to be concealed just like `awrah)."*[15]

This *hadîth* is deemed *sahîh* (aurthentic) by At-Tirmidhî. Also, it is narrated on the authority of Umm Salamah that she asked the Prophet (PBUH) saying:

> *"Can a woman perform prayer while wearing a dir` (a long upper garment) and a veil but not wearing a loincloth? He (PBUH) replied, "(Yes,) only if the dir` is long enough to cover her instep."*[16]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)

Moreover, Abû Dâwûd, At-Tirmidhî, and Ibn Mâjah narrated on the authority of `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Allah does not accept the prayer of a woman who has reached puberty unless she wears a veil."[17]

At-Tirmidhî commented:

"The opinion of scholars is that if a woman who has reached puberty performs prayer while a certain part of her `awrah is exposed, her prayer is deemed invalid."[18]

In addition to the aforesaid *hadîths* concerning a woman's *`awrah*, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"... And not display their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their head-covers over their chests and not display their adornment [i.e. beauty] except to their husbands..." (Qur'ân: An-Nûr: 31)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

"O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments..." (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 59)

Moreover, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And when you ask [his wives] for something, ask them from behind a partition..." (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 53)

For more illustration, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

"Men would pass by us when we accompanied the Messenger (PBUH) while we were in the state of ihrâm (a state of ritual consecration during Hajj or `Umrah). When they came by us, every one of us would let down her veil over her face, and when they had passed on, we would uncover our faces."[19]

The aforesaid texts as well as their likes in the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), which are so numerous, stress that everything in a woman is considered *`awrah* that has to be concealed in the presence of men who are *ajnabîs* (foreign, marriageable males); nothing of a woman's body is permissible to be exposed in the presence of an *ajnabî* (a foreign, marriageable male), whether in prayer or elsewhere. However, if a woman performs prayer in a place void of *ajnabîs*, it is permissible for her to uncover her face, as it is not regarded as *`awrah* during prayer provided there is no *ajnabî* to see her face, as it is impermissible in this case.

It is really shameful, upsetting and disappointing that many of the Muslim females of this modern age have reached a dangerous extent of dissoluteness and debauchery; they compete in exposing their bodies and wear see-through clothing and the like, imitating the unbelieving and apostate females. There is neither might nor power except in Allah, the Most High, and the Most Great!

Allah, Exalted be He, does not only command concealing *`awrah* during prayer, but He also enjoins Muslims to appear well when going to perform prayer; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O children of Adam, take your adornment [i.e. wear your clothing] at every masjid..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 31)

This means that Allah commands His servants to wear their best, cleanest, and most beautiful clothing when heading for mosques to perform prayer, as they will stand in prayer between the Hands of Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He. Therefore, one has to appear perfectly well, physically and spiritually, to stand before Almighty Allah in prayer.

The third condition (of prayer): To avoid impurity. One of the conditions of the validity of prayer is the avoidance of impurity, and being in a perfect state of purity, whether related to one's body, clothing, or the place in which one stands to perform prayer. Impurity here means a special kind of filthy materials that makes it impermissible for one to perform prayer, such as the flesh of dead animals, blood, wine, urine, and stool. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And your clothing purify."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Muddaththir: 4)

Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Purify yourselves from urine, for most of the torture in the grave is because of it."*

He (PBUH) also commanded a woman to wash her garment and purify it from menstruation blood before performing prayer in it,[20] and enjoined scrubbing the soles of one's shoes to clean them before performing prayer wearing them[21]. The Prophet (PBUH) ordered his Companions to pour a bucket of water over the place in the mosque where a Bedouin had urinated. Such incidents, as well as many others, are proofs of the necessity of avoiding impurity while performing prayer, as prayer is invalid if there is something impure afflicting one's body, one's clothing, or the place in which one performs prayer; the same ruling is applicable in case one is carrying something impure.

If one notices something impure on one's body or clothing after performing prayer, one's prayer is deemed valid so long as one has not been aware of it. Likewise, if one has been aware of impurity and has forgotten to remove it before performing prayer, one's prayer is deemed valid according to the sound juristic opinion in this regard. However, if impurity is noticed during prayer and one is able to remove it without making much movement during prayer (such as taking off one's impure shoes or turban), one is to remove it and continue performing prayer. But if unable to remove it, one's prayer is deemed invalid.

Prayer is invalid if performed at a graveyard, except for the Funeral Prayer, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The whole earth is a masjid (a place for prayer) except bathrooms and graveyards."*

This *hadîth* is related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth* except An-Nasâ'î, and was deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by At-Tirmidhî[22]. The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

> *"Do not face graves in prayer and do not sit on them."*
>
> (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth* except Al-Bukhârî)[23]

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Do not take graves as masjids (i.e. places for prayer)."*[24]

The reason for such prohibition is not just to avoid impurity, but for fear that graves might be taken as sacred places or idols to be worshipped by people. That is, the prohibition of performing prayer at graveyards is intended to avoid worshipping their dwellers (the dead) afterwards. Still, the Funeral Prayer is an exception of that ruling, as it is permissible to be performed at graves, as done by the Prophet (PBUH),[25] which makes the Prophetic prohibition restricted to certain cases. So, whatever is related to graves is prohibited to perform prayer therein, such as graves themselves, graveyards, etc.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

> *"The Imâms agree that it is impermissible to build a mosque over a grave, or to bury a dead person in a mosque. If the mosque has been built before the grave, the grave inside has to be leveled to the mosque floor, or to be disentombed if it has been recently built. However, if the mosque has been built after the grave, we should either pull down the mosque or pull down whatever indicates that the place is a grave rather than a mosque, for it is prohibited to offer prayer at a mosque built on a grave, be it obligatory or supererogatory prayer."*[26]

On the other hand, prayer is invalid if performed at a mosque whose *qiblah*[27] faces a grave, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Do not face graves in prayer."*

It is also prohibited to perform prayer in a toilet, as they are places specified for urination and defecation and connected with impurity; since the Lawgiver[28] prohibits mentioning the Name of Allah in a toilet, then, with greater reason, it is prohibited to perform prayer in such places, which are inhabited by devils. Moreover, it is prohibited to perform prayer in bathrooms, where one gets washed, because they are places where people's *`awrah*s (private parts) are exposed and where devils live; this prohibition includes all the places inside the bathroom.

In addition, it is impermissible to perform prayer at camel stalls; **Shaykhul-Islâm Taqiyyud-Dîn Ibn Taymiyah** said:

> *"It is prohibited to perform prayer at their stalls (i.e. the camels') as their stalls are shelters for devils, and it is also prohibited to perform prayer in a bathroom, as it is a shelter for devils. So, such places of evil spirits reasonably necessitate avoiding performing prayer therein."*[29]

It is detestable to perform prayer in a place containing pictures or the like; **Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim** said:

> *"Such places are more deserving of avoiding performing prayer therein than bathrooms. The detestability of performing prayer in a bathroom is out of fear that the place is impure, or because it is the devils' dwelling place which is the sound opinion. Yet, the detestability of performing prayer in a place containing pictures or the like is intended to avoid polytheism, for the polytheism of most of the previous nations was related to paintings and graves."*[30]

Dear gentle Muslim reader, you should take care of your prayer and be keen on its validity, verifying your purity before being engaged in it, and avoiding the places where performing prayer is invalid, so as to ensure that your prayer is legally performed in the way decreed by Allah. In addition, you should never neglect any of the rulings on prayer or disregard it, for prayer is the basic pillar of your religion, if perfected, your faith will be perfected as well; if not, your faith will be imperfect. May Allah guide us all to that which leads to goodness and righteousness!

The fourth condition (of prayer): Facing the *qiblah* (direction of prayer). Among the conditions of the validity of prayer is facing the *qiblah*, the honorable Ka`bah. It is called *qiblah* because all Muslims turn their face towards it during prayer. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...So turn your face [i.e. yourself] toward Al-Masjid Al-Harâm (the Sacred Mosque). And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces [i.e. yourselves] toward it [in prayer]..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 144)

So, whoever is so near to the Ka`bah that he can see it, it is obligatory for him to turn his whole body toward it during prayer, as such a person can face it well, as he sees it with his eyes. Thus, it is impermissible for such a person to deviate from its direction. On the other hand, if one is near to the Ka`bah but there is something that hinders one from seeing it, one in this case has to try facing it as much as possible. However, if one is anywhere in the world so that one is away from the Ka`bah, one then can face the direction believed to be that of the Ka`bah, and moving a bit leftward or rightward does not matter, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"There is qiblah (direction of prayer) between the east and the west."*[31]

This *hadîth* was deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by At-Tirmidhî, and was narrated by many of the Prophet's Companions. Surely, this *hadîth* specifies the *qiblah* for Medina and all the places of the same direction and location. However, the *qiblah* for the east, for example, is between the south and the north, and so is the *qiblah* for the west.

Generally, prayer is invalid without facing the qiblah, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces [i.e. yourselves] toward it [in prayer]..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 144)

"Wherever" here indicates that the *qiblah* is to be faced during prayer no matter where one is; traveling by land, sea, air, eastward, westward, etc. Yet, one is not obliged to face the *qiblah* if unable to, such as being tied up or crucified in a way that one cannot face it. In such a case, one is to perform prayer facing the available direction even if it is not the *qiblah*, as this condition is inapplicable in such a case according to juristic consensus. Similarly, if one is engaged in a fierce war, or one flees from a flood, fire, a wild animal, or an enemy, or one is

so ill that one is unable to face the *qiblah*, one in such cases can perform prayer in the same state one is in, even if one is not facing the *qiblah*, and one's prayer will be deemed valid as well. This is because the condition is nullified in case of inability; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"If I command you to do something, then do (of) it as much as you can."

Also, it is stated in a *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim that the Muslims in case of extreme fear used to perform prayer with and without facing the *qiblah*[32].

How to Identify the *Qiblah*

There are many ways through which one can know the *qiblah*, among which are:

Informing: One can be informed by a legally responsible, trustworthy person of the direction of *qiblah*, provided that the informer is certain about it.

Following the *qiblah* observed by mosques and *mihrâbs*: One can identify the *qiblah* by following the *qiblah* observed by a mosque or a *mihrâb* (prayer niche), which would show one the right direction of the *qiblah*.

Astronomy: The *qiblah* can also be identified by means of stars; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And by the stars they are [also] guided."

(Qur'ân: An-Nahl: 16)

The fifth condition (of prayer): Intention; to intend performing an act of worship to draw near to Allah, Exalted be He. The heart is the real place of intention, so one does not have to declare it overtly, for this is regarded as an act of innovation in religion that had never been observed either by the Prophet (PBUH) or by his Companions. So, one is to intend performing a certain prayer only with one's heart, not tongue, in accordance with the *hadîth* that states:

"Deeds (i.e. their correctness and rewards) depend upon intentions."[33]

One intends performing a certain prayer upon the opening *takbîr*[34] of that prayer, so that the intention becomes associated with the act of worship; there is no harm if one intends a bit earlier. It is a condition that intention must last until the end of prayer. However, prayer becomes invalid if intention is cancelled during it. If one has said the opening *takbîr* in an obligatory prayer, whether one is led in prayer or performs it alone, it is permissible for one to change one's intention and perform it as a supererogatory prayer provided there is a valid excuse, such as joining a congregational prayer instead of praying alone.

It is important to know that some people have done strict innovations in religion concerning intentions of prayer which have never been decreed by Allah. For example, when intending to perform a certain prayer, some declare overtly which prayer they are going to perform, how many *rak`ah*s (units of prayer) they intend to perform, and who the *imâm* (leader) of prayer is, and so on. Such acts had never been done by the Messenger (PBUH) who had neither been reported to have declared his intention, whether secretly or overtly, upon performing prayer, nor had he been reported to have enjoined that.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Declaring intention overtly is neither obligatory nor desirable as uniformly agreed upon by Muslim scholars. Rather, one who pronounces it overtly is regarded to be an innovator in religion who contradicts the Sharî`ah (Islamic Law). If one does so intentionally, thinking that it is an act of Sharî`ah, one is deemed an ignorant, straying Muslim who deserves discretionary punishment for that. If such a person insists on declaring intention overtly upon each prayer after being informed and enlightened, especially if he disturbs his prayer mates with his voice or repeats it several times, he deserves to receive severe discretionary punishment for that..."

Ibn Taymiyah then added:

"... Some of the modern scholars maintained the obligation of doing so (i.e. pronouncing intention overtly) basing their opinion on misinterpretation of an opinion of Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î. However, the majority of the followers of Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î viewed the invalidity of such an interpretation of the Shâfi`î's opinion. This is because, Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î said about prayer, 'It is obligatory to begin it with overt pronunciation.' So, those modern scholars mistakenly thought

> *that Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î meant that it was obligatory to pronounce one's intention overtly upon each prayer. However, all the followers of Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î deemed this a misinterpretation, pointing out that Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î only meant the overt pronunciation of the opening takbîr of prayer, not the intention..."*[35]

In addition to the fact that expressing intention overtly is *bid`ah* (a matter innovated in religion), it could also lead to hypocrisy; one's intention has to be expressed secretly in one's heart as a sign of sincerity and devotion to Allah while performing acts of worship.

To sum up, a Muslim has to abide by the limits set by the *Sharî`ah* (Islamic Law), to adhere to the acts of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), and to avoid whatsoever kinds of innovation (in religion) regardless of its adherents. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Say, 'Would you acquaint Allah with your religion while Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, and Allah is Knowing of all things?"*** (Qur'ân: Al-Hujurât: 16)

Allah is Knowing of the intention of the heart, so a Muslim does not have to pronounce it overtly whether upon performing prayer or in any other act of worship; Allah, Exalted be He, knows best. May Allah guide us all to what He likes and pleases!

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (527) [2/13] and Muslim (85).
2 Al-Bukhârî (528) [2/15] and Muslim (1520) [3/173].
3 Muslim (1387) [2/114].
4 Al-Bukhârî (536) [2/25] and Muslim (1394) [3/118].
5 See Muslim (1424) [3/130] and Al-Bukhârî (4533) [8/245]; see also Muslim (1425) [3/130].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1954) [4/249] and Muslim (2553)[4/209].
7 Al-Bukhârî (561) [2/55], Muslim (1438) [3/137] and At-Tirmidhî (164) [1/304].
8 *Tahajjud*: The Night Vigil Prayer.
9 Al-Bukhârî (568) [2/65] and Muslim (1460) [3/147].
10 *`Awrah*: The private parts or parts of the body which are illegal to expose to others; a male's *`awrah* is from the navel to the knees whereas in another view it is said to be the external organs of sex and excretion. As for a female's *`awrah*, it includes all her body in one view whereas in another it is all her body with the exception of her face and hands.
11 Ahmad (25823) [6/248], Abû Dâwûd (641) [1/298], At-Tirmidhî (377) [2/215] and Ibn Mâjah (655) [1/362].

12 Ahmad (19978) [5/5], Abû Dâwûd (4017) [4/197], At-Tirmidhî (2799) [5/110], Ibn Mâjah (192) [2/448]; see also Al-Bukhârî (1/500) [1/500].
13 Abû Dâwûd (3140) [3/327] and Ibn Mâjah (1460) [2/200].
14 Ahmad (2492) [1/342] and At-Tirmidhî (2801) [5/111]; see also Abû Dâwûd (4014) [4/197] and At-Tirmidhî (2803) [5/111].
15 At-Tirmidhî (1175) [3/476].
16 Abû Dâwûd (640) [1/297].
17 Ahmad (25823) [6/248], Abû Dâwûd (641) [1/298], At-Tirmidhî (377) [2/215] and Ibn Mâjah (655) [1/362].
18 See *Jâmi` At-Tirmidhî* (2/216).
19 Abû Dâwûd (1833) [2/285] and Ibn Mâjah (2935) [3/429].
20 Al-Bukhârî (277) [1/430] and Muslim (673) [3/190].
21 Abû Dâwûd (650) [1/302].
22 Ahmad (11903) [3/121], Abû Dâwûd (492) [1/236], At-Tirmidhî (317) [2/131] and Ibn Mâjah (745) [1/412].
23 Muslim (2248) [4/42], Ahmad (17184) [4/185], Abû Dâwûd (3229) [3/359], At-Tirmidhî (1051) [3/367] and An-Nasâ'î (759) [1/401].
24 Muslim (1188) [3/17].
25 Al-Bukhârî (1336) [3/261] and Muslim (2208) [4/27]; see also Al-Bukhârî (1337) [3/261] and Muslim (2212) [4/29].
26 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [4/521-523], [11/290, 291], [17/502, 503], [19/41], [21/304, 321-322], [22/194-195], [27/140].
27 The *qiblah*: The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka`bah.
28 The Lawgiver of *Sharî`ah* (Islamic Law) is Allah, Exalted be He; the term can also refer to the Prophet (PBUH) as he never ordained but what was revealed to him by Allah.
29 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [25/240].
30 See *Zâdul-Ma`âd* [2/147, 183].
31 At-Tirmidhî (342) [1/171] and Ibn Mâjah (1011) [1/534].
32 Al-Bukhârî (943) [2/555]; see also Muslim (1941) [3/64].
33 Al-Bukhârî (1) [1/12] and Muslim (4904) [7/55].
34 The opening *takbîr* (in prayer): Opening prayer with saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
35 See Ibn Taymiyah's *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [22/218-221], [37/57].

Etiquette of Heading for Mosque

Gentle Muslim reader, you really have to know the legalized standards of behavior prior to prayer, so as to get ready for it properly. This is because prayer is a great act of worship that must be preceded with the proper preparation and readiness, so that a Muslim can engage in such a glorious act of worship in the best state.

Therefore, if one heads for the mosque to join one's fellow Muslims in a congregational prayer, one should walk calmly, peacefully, and tranquilly, without haste. One should be in a state of solemnity and calmness, averting one's vision (from looking at what Allah prohibits), lowering one's voice and trying as much as possible not to look around.

It is stated in the Two Sahîhs that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If the iqâmah is declared - (in another narration, 'When you hear the iqâmah...')*[1] *- proceed to perform the prayer with calmness and solemnity and do not make haste. And pray whatever rak`ahs (units of prayer) you get (with the people) and complete the rest which you have missed.")*[2]

Moreover, Imâm Muslim related that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"...When one of you is preparing for prayer, he is in fact engaged in prayer."*[3]

When a Muslim heads for the mosque to perform prayer, he should not be late, so as not to miss the opening *takbîr*, i.e. to attend the congregational prayer from the beginning. In addition, while making towards the mosque, one should make one's pace slow, taking one's steps close to one another to get more rewards. It is stated in the Two Sahîhs that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If a person performs ablution and does it perfectly, and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of performing prayer, then for each step he takes toward the mosque, Allah raises him a degree in reward and blots out (i.e. forgives) one of his sins."*[4]

When a Muslim reaches the mosque, he should step in with his right leg, saying the following invocation:

> *"In the Name of Allah, I seek refuge with Allah the Most Great, in His Honorable Face, and in His infinitely preexistent Sovereignty, from the accursed Satan. O Allah! Confer Your blessings upon Muhammad. O Allah! Forgive my sins and let the doors of Your Mercy be open for me."*

When one wishes to come out of the mosque, one should step out with one's left leg saying the aforesaid invocation, but instead of saying, "... *and let the doors of Your Mercy be open for me*", one should rather say, "... *and let the doors of Your Favor be opened for me.*" This is because the mosque is the place of seeking Allah's Mercy, while outside the mosque is where one seeks livelihood, which Allah bestows upon His servants out of His Favor.

Once one enters the mosque, one should perform two *rak`ahs* before sitting, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone of you enters a mosque, he should perform two rak`ahs before sitting."*[5]

Then one sits waiting for the *iqâmah*; while waiting for the *iqâmah*, one should spend the time between the two *rak`ahs* and the *iqâmah* in glorifying and praising Allah, and in reciting the Qur'ân. One has also to avoid frivolous play, such as interlacing one's fingers and the like, for the Prophet (PBUH) forbade doing so while waiting for the *iqâmah*, saying:

"When anyone of you is in the mosque, he should not interlace (his fingers), for interlacing (fingers) is from Satan."[6]

As for those in the mosque for reasons other than waiting for the *iqâmah*, they are allowed to interlace their fingers, as it is stated that the Prophet (PBUH) once interlaced his fingers after concluding prayer with *taslîm*[7].

While waiting for prayer in the mosque, one should not enter into talks unrelated to religion, because it is stated in a *hadîth* that doing so eats up rewards in the same way as fire eats up wood[8]. In another *hadîth*, the Prophet stated that when anyone enters a mosque, he is considered to be in prayer as long as he is waiting for the prayer, and the angels keep on asking for Allah's forgiveness for him[9]. Therefore, a Muslim should not miss such great rewards by being engaged in frivolous play or idle talks.

When the *iqâmah* is declared, one should stand up when the prayer caller says "*qadi-qâmatis-salâh*" (i.e. "Prayer is commenced"), for the Prophet (PBUH) used to do so. It is also allowed for one to stand up on the beginning of declaring the *iqâmah* if one sees the *imâm* (prayer leader); if not, it is better not to stand up until one sees the *imâm*. Besides, one should always be keen on standing in the first row (in congregational prayers), for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"If the people knew the reward for pronouncing the adhân (prayer call) and for standing in the first row (in congregational prayers), and found no other way to get that reward except by casting lots, they would cast lots."[10]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

He (PBUH) also said:

"The best rows for men are the first rows..."[11]

As for men, it is better to be close to the *imâm*, as the Prophet (PBUH), who used to lead the Muslims in prayer, said:

"Let those of you who are sedate and prudent be near me (i.e. be in the first row)."[12]

As regards women, it is better for them to be in the last rows, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"...And the best rows for women are the last ones."

This is because women will not be visible to men in this way.

The *imâm* and the ones led behind him ought to be cautious to straighten rows, for the Prophet said:

> *"Straighten your rows, for the straightening of a row is part of the perfection of prayer."*[13]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

In another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Straighten your rows or else Allah will alter your faces."*[14]

Thus, when standing for congregational prayer, Muslims should straighten their rows so that their shoulders and ankles become aligned, leaving no space between one another, for the Prophet (PBUH) said in this regard:

> *"Straighten your rows and stand close to one another."*[15]

This *hadîth* means that the ones led in prayer ought to stand close to one another, leaving no gaps between them for Satan.

The Prophet (PBUH) has always been greatly concerned with straightening rows and making the ones led in prayer stand close to one another, which indicates how important and useful it is. This does not mean that people should widen between their feet in a way that disturbs those standing beside them, as mistakenly done by some ignorant people. Such people thus leave gaps in rows, causing harm and annoyance to those standing next to them without having any legal proof supporting such an act. Therefore, Muslims should pay more attention to such issues and care for straightening their rows in prayers, following the example of the Prophet (PBUH) and ensuring the perfection of their prayer; may Allah guide us all to whatever He likes and pleases.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (636) [1/53].
2 Al-Bukhârî (908) [2/105] and Muslim (1358) [3/100].
3 Muslim (1359) [3/101].
4 Al-Bukhârî (477) [1/73] and Muslim (1504) [3/168].
5 Al-Bukhârî (1163) [3/63] and Muslim (1652) [3/232].
6 Ahmad (11324) [3/43] and Ibn Abû Shaybah (4824) [1/420]. Al-Haythamî in his book *'Majma' Az-Zawâ'id'* (*The Collection of Additional Hadîths*) (2/25).
7 Al-Bukhârî (482) [1/731] and Muslim (1288) [3/69]
8 This tradition was not mentioned by any one of the compilers of *Hadîth* as said by Al-`Irâqî in his book *Takhrîjul 'Ihyâ'* (1/136); Ibn As-Subkî in his book *'Tabaqât Ash-Shâfi'iyyah'* (4/145) and Al-Albânî in his book *'As-Silsilah Ad-Da`îfah'* (4) [1/18]

9 Al-Bukhârî (477) [1/730] and Muslim (1504) [3/168]
10 Al-Bukhârî (615) [2/126] and Muslim (980) [2/378]
11 Muslim (984) [2/38]
12 Muslim (973) [2/376]
13 Al-Bukhârî (723) [2/271] and Muslim (974) [2/376]
14 Al-Bukhârî (717) [2/268] and Muslim (977) [2/377]
15 Al-Bukhârî (719) [2/269]

Prayer: Integral Parts, Obligatory Practices and Acts of the *Sunnah*

Prayer is a great act of worship which includes decreed statements and postures forming the perfect form of its performance. Scholars define prayer as special statements and postures starting with *takbîr* and ending with *taslîm*.

These statements and postures of prayer are divided into three sections, namely the integral parts, the obligatory practices, and the acts of the *Sunnah*. **The integral parts** of prayer are those the negligence of any of which, intentionally or inattentively, invalidates prayer or invalidates the *rak`ah* (unit of prayer) in which it is neglected; being replaced by the next one, as we will point out later. As for **the obligatory practices** of prayer, if any of them is intentionally neglected, prayer is invalidated, but if inattentively, it is not invalidated, and performing the Prostration of Forgetfulness will be obligatory then. Concerning **the acts of the *Sunnah*** to be observed during prayer,

the negligence of any of them neither affects the validity of prayer nor makes it incomplete. Still, we have to bear in mind that whenever the Prophet (PBUH) performed prayer, he observed its integral parts, obligatory practices, and acts of the *Sunnah*, and we have to follow his example, for he (PBUH) said:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."[1]

A-The Integral Parts of Prayer

They are fourteen:

The first is to stand while performing an obligatory prayer; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And stand before Allah, devoutly obedient."

(Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 238)

Moreover, in the *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* narrated on the authority of `Imrân, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Perform prayer while standing; if you cannot, perform it while sitting; if you cannot, then perform it while lying on your side."[2]

The above-mentioned verse and *hadîth* prove that standing is obligatory while performing one of the obligatory prayers so long as one is able to. Yet, if one is unable to pray while standing due to an illness, one is allowed then to pray while sitting or lying on one's side. The same goes for one in a state of extreme fear, one who is naked (finding no clothing to conceal one's `*awrah*), one whose recovery requires sitting or lying on one's side rather than standing, or one who is unable to stand because the roof of the place where one prays is not high enough provided one is unable to go out (to pray in the mosque). Likewise, in case the regular *imâm* of a mosque leads the people in prayer while sitting, due to a legal excuse, the people led in prayer behind him should also perform it while sitting, following their regular *imâm*. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) was once ill and led the people in prayer while sitting, commanding them to do the same, i.e. to sit as well[3].

As for a supererogatory prayer, it is permissible to perform it while standing or sitting. In other words, it is not obligatory to perform it while standing, as it is stated that the Prophet (PBUH) sometimes performed supererogatory prayers while sitting, without any legal excuse[4].

The second integral part of prayer is the opening *takbîr* (in the beginning of prayer); the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"... Then face the qiblah (direction of prayer towards the Ka`bah) and say takbîr."[5]

This is also supported by the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"... And takbîr is the beginning of prayer (that makes all lawful acts outside prayer unlawful in prayer."[6]

The Prophet (PBUH) was never reported to have started performing prayer without the opening *takbîr* (saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*", i.e. "Allah is the Greatest"). There is by no means any other sufficient substitute for it when opening a prayer, according to what is reported to have been observed and enjoined by the Prophet (PBUH).

The third integral part of prayer is the recitation of the *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"No prayer is (accepted) from whoever does not recite Al-Fâtihah (in it)."[7]

Reciting *Al-Fâtihah* is one of the integral parts of each *rak`ah* in prayer, as authentically narrated to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH). Moreover, when the Prophet (PBUH) taught the one who used to perform prayer improperly, he ordered him to recite *Al-Fâtihah* in each *rak`ah*[8].

The question here: Is everyone performing a congregational prayer obliged to recite *Al-Fâtihah*, or is it only obligatory to be recited by the *imâm* in case of a publicly-recited prayer and by the single worshipper? In fact, scholars disagree in this concern. So, to avoid any doubt and to be in the safe side, one is to recite *Al-Fâtihah* if one is led in a secretly-recited prayer, and to recite it during the pause made by the *imâm* (after his recitation of *Al-Fâtihah*) in case of publicly-recited prayers.

The fourth integral part of prayer is bowing in every *rak`ah*; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"O you who have believed, bow and prostrate..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 77)

Moreover, bowing during prayer is authentically stated in the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), so it is an integral part of prayer according to the Qur'ân, *Sunnah*, and consensus[9].

Proper bowing during prayer is done by bending one's body forward so that one's hands can reach one's knees in normal cases (i.e. when one's hands are neither longer nor shorter than normal). Otherwise, one tries to bend one's body in a degree similar to that of normal cases as much as possible. It is also sufficient for one praying while sitting to bend one's face instead, so that it is aligned with one's knees.

The fifth and the sixth integral parts of prayer are rising following bowing, and standing upright, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do so while performing prayer; he (PBUH) said:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."

The seventh integral part of prayer is prostrating, i.e. making one's forehead touch the ground, as well as the other organs of prostration, namely the nose, the hands, the knees and the bottom of the toes. Prostration is to be done twice in each *rak`ah*; it is a Divine command, as Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"...And prostrate..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 77) It is also a Prophetic command according to many *hadîths*,[10] for he (PBUH) said, as mentioned above:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."[11]

The organs of prostration are seven as previously mentioned (the forehead and the nose together, both hands, both knees, and the bottom of the toes of both feet). Each of them has to touch the ground well, as much as possible. In fact, prostration is the greatest integral part of prayer; the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"The state in which a servant is nearest to his Lord is while prostrating himself."[12]

Thus, the Prophet (PBUH) teaches us that prostration is the optimum state that draws one near to the Lord, Allah.

The eighth integral part of prayer is raising oneself from prostration and sitting erect between the two prostrations; Imâm Muslim related that `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

"When he (the Prophet) raised his head after prostration, he did not prostrate himself (again) until he had sat erect."[13]

The ninth integral part of prayer is being tranquil while performing all the actions of prayer. Tranquility here means performing the acts of

prayer serenely, humbly and submissively, moving as less as possible. The Qur'ân and *Sunnah* state that the prayer of one who does not perform it in a state of tranquility and devotion is deemed incomplete, and it is obligatory for one to re-perform it in this case.

The tenth and the eleventh integral parts of prayer are the Final *Tashahhud*[14] and the posture of sitting for it. It is authenticated that the Prophet (PBUH) used to recite *Tashahhud* during prayer and never abandoned it,[15] so we must follow in his footsteps, as he (PBUH) said:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."

Ibn Mas`ûd (may Allah be pleased with him) said, *"Before Tashahhud was decreed, we used to recite instead..."*[16]; the phrase *"was decreed"* here implies that it is obligatory to recite *Tashahhud* in prayer.

The twelfth integral part of prayer is invoking Allah to confer His blessings upon Muhammad, by saying:

"O Allah! Confer Your blessings upon Muhammad..."

Whatever is recited more than this is an act of the *Sunnah*, not an obligatory act.

The thirteenth integral part of prayer is observing succession when performing the above-mentioned integral parts of prayer, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform them successively, and he (PBUH) commanded Muslims to follow his example while performing prayer, saying, as mentioned above:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."

In addition, when the Prophet (PBUH) taught the one, who performed prayer improperly, the right way of performing prayer, he pointed out the aforesaid acts successively, one after another[17].

The fourteenth integral part of prayer is concluding prayer with *taslîm*, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"...And its conclusion is taslîm."[18]

So, after *taslîm*, what has been unlawful to be done during prayer (such as eating, drinking, talking, etc.) becomes lawful once again, as *taslîm* is decreed as a sign of the end of the prayer.

Gentle reader, you should be aware that a Muslim should never neglect any of the aforesaid integral parts of prayer. As for the opening *takbîr*, if it is not pronounced, then prayer is not begun, and one thus will not be considered in a state of prayer. Regarding the other integral parts of prayer, intentional negligence of any of them causes prayer to be invalid. However, if it is inattentively neglected, such as bowing or prostrating, and one remembers that before starting another *rak'ah*, one then performs whatever one has inattentively missed. But, if one remembers after the following *rak'ah* has been started, the previous *rak'ah* (one of whose integrals is inattentively neglected) will be null and the following one will take its place. Still, prayer is not invalidated in the latter case, provided that one performs the two prostrations of forgetfulness even if one realizes the missed integral part after *taslîm*. In case the forgotten integral part is the Final *Tashahhud* or one of the two *taslîms*, and one remembers it after concluding prayer with *taslîm*, one can re-perform it, perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness, and then say *taslîm*. However, if the forgotten part is something other than the Final *Tashahhud* or one of the two *taslîms*, such as bowing or prostrating, one makes up for it by performing a whole *rak'ah* then performing the two prostrations of forgetfulness, provided that there is no long interval between ending prayer and remembering the forgotten integral, or that one's ablution is not invalidated by then. Otherwise, the whole prayer must be re-performed.

What a great act of worship prayer is, and how glorious are its words and actions! May Allah grant us success in establishing it regularly and observing it perfectly!

B-The Obligatory Acts of Prayer

There are eight obligatory acts to be observed during prayer:

1- **All the *takbîrs*** of prayer - other than the opening *takbîr* - are among the obligatory acts, not the integral parts, which have to be observed during prayer. The example for this is the transition *takbîrs*.

2- ***Tasmî'***,[19] which is only obligatory to be said by the *imâm* or by one praying alone, not the one(s) led in prayer.

3- ***Tahmîd***,[20] which is obligatory to be said by the *imâm*, the one praying alone, and the one(s) led in prayer, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"When the imâm says, 'Allah listens to the one who praises Him,' you should say, 'O our Lord, to You be (all) the praise.' "[21]

4- **Saying, *"Subhâna Rabbiyal-`Azîm"*** (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great") only once while bowing; it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to say it three times at least, or ten times at most, for the sake of perfecting prayer.

5- **Saying, *"Subhâna Rabbiyal-A`lâ"*** (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High") only once while prostrating; it is also an act of the *Sunnah* to say it up to three times.

6- **Invoking Allah saying,** *"O my Lord, forgive me,"* once between the two prostrations, and it is an act of the *Sunnah* to say it up to three times.

7- **Reciting the First *Tashahhud*,** saying:

"(All) compliments, prayers and good things are due to Allah; peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the Mercy of Allah and His blessings (be upon you). Peace be upon us and upon the pious servants of Allah. I testify that there is no deity (worthy of worship) but Allah, Alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger."

Or the like of what is reported to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH).

8- **Sitting for reciting the First *Tashahhud*,** as reported to have been regularly observed by the Prophet (PBUH), who said:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."

It is worth mentioning here that prayer is invalidated if one abandons any of the aforesaid eight obligatory practices of prayer intentionally, as one thus alters and distorts prayer. Yet, if one does not perform any of them by remissness or ignorance, it is obligatory for one to offer the two prostrations of forgetfulness instead, as a way of making up for one's negligence of an obligatory practice of prayer whose nonperformance is forbidden.

C-The Acts of the *Sunnah* to be Observed during Prayer

They are divided into two types; verbal and physical practices of the *Sunnah*, abandoning any of which does not invalidate prayer, unlike the previous two sections (the integral parts and the obligatory acts of prayer).So, there are two kinds of the acts of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to be observed during prayer:

1- Verbal Acts of the *Sunnah*

There are many verbal acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed during prayer, among which are the opening invocation of prayer, seeking refuge with Allah from Satan, saying *Basmalah*,[22] *ta'mîn*,[23] and reciting some of the Qur'ân following reciting *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)* in the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer, the *Jumu'ah* (Friday) Prayer, the *'Îd* (Feast) Prayer, the Eclipse Prayer, and in the first two *rak'ahs* of the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer, the *Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer, the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer, and the *'Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer.

Among the verbal acts of the *Sunnah* of prayer is saying, following *tahmîd*:

> *"(Our Lord, to You be (all) praise) with which are filled the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, and whatever You will afterward."*

It is only an act of the *Sunnah* to say, "*Subhâna Rabbiyal-'Azîm*" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great) while bowing and "*Subhâna Rabbiyal-A'lâ*" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) while prostrating; such verbal acts may be said more than once. Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to say more than once, between the two prostrations, *"O Allah! Forgive me."* Also, among the verbal acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed during prayer is to invoke Allah saying, following the Final *Tashahhud*:

> *"O Allah! I seek refuge with You from the torture of the Fire, from the torture in the grave, from the trial of life and death, and from the evil of the trial of Al-Masîhud-Dajjâl (Antichrist)."*

In addition, one can invoke Allah with other invocations that the Prophet used to say in the Final *Tashahhud*.

2- Physical Acts of the *Sunnah*

There are physical acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed while performing prayer, such as raising one's hands (so that the thumbs be near the ears) when saying the opening *takbîr*; the same is to be observed before bowing, and also when standing upright after bowing. It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to put one's right hand on the left one, putting the latter either on the chest or under the navel when rising from bowing. Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to keep looking at the position of prostrating during prayer. Also, one is to put one's hands on one's knees while bowing, straightening one's back (as if forming a right angle), and making one's head in alignment with one's back without lowering or raising the head. During prostration, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to keep one's abdomen apart from one's thighs, and one's thighs apart from one's legs, making one's forehead, nose and the rest of the aforesaid seven parts of prostration well settled on the ground (or the place of prayer).

In addition to the above, there are many verbal and physical acts of the *Sunnah* concerning prayer pointed out in details in juristic books. At any rate, it is not obligatory to observe these acts of the *Sunnah* during prayer; whoever observes them or any of them will be rewarded, and there is no sin on those who do not observe them, just like the ruling on all other acts of the *Sunnah*. We do not find any logical justification for the strictness and narrow-mindedness observed by some youth nowadays when applying the acts of the *Sunnah* during prayer, which may lead them to perform it in a very strange manner. For instance, some of them may bow their heads while standing as if they were in a state of bowing. They may also put their hands on the upper part of the chest, under the neck, instead of putting them on the chest or under the navel as stated in the *Sunnah*. In addition, some of them are so strict in keeping themselves screened while praying (so that no one can pass in front of them) that they do not perform the supererogatory prayer in the same row (where they have offered a congregational prayer); they rather perform it elsewhere in the mosque provided it is a screened place. Some of those strict youth also stretch their heads forwards and their legs backwards during prostration that they look as if they were lying on the ground rather than prostrating. Furthermore, some of them, while being in a standing position, keep their feet wide apart in a way that disturbs those beside them. These are, in fact, strange practices that may lead to strictness and excessiveness, which are detestable in religion.

May Allah guide them and us to the straight path, and make us work accordingly.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (6008) [10/538].
2 Al-Bukhârî (1117) [2/758], Abû Dâwûd (952) [1/409] and At-Tirmidhî (372) [2/208].
3 Al-Bukhârî (805) [2/375] and Muslim (920) [2/351].
4 Muslim (1696) [3/253].
5 Al-Bukhârî (6251) [11/44] and Muslim (884) [2/330].
6 Muslim (1110) [2/438] and also in (1810) [3/302].
7 Al-Bukhârî (756) [2/306] and Muslim (872) [422].
8 Al-Bukhârî (757) [2/306] and Muslim (883) [2/329]. Concerning the Prophet's order to recite *Al-Fâtihah* as reported in Sahîh of Ibn Hibbân (1787) [5/88].
9 See the book of *'Al-Mu'jamul-Mufahras'* (2/298).
10 See the book of *'Al-Mu'jamul Mufahras'* (2/415).
11 Al-Bukhârî (6008).
12 Muslim (1083) [2/423].

13 Muslim (498)

14 (The Final) *Tashahhud*: Reciting, "*(All) compliments, prayers and good things are due to Allah; peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the Mercy of Allah and His blessings (be upon you). Peace be upon us and upon the pious servants of Allah. I testify that there is no deity (worthy of worship) but Allah, Alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. O Allah! Confer Your blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You conferred Your blessings upon Ibrâhîm (Abraham) and the family of Ibrâhîm. Verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable. And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You blessed Ibrâhîm and the family of Ibrâhîm. Verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable.*"

15 This may be concluded from a lot of *hadith*s such as that one related by Muslim (1110) [2/438].

16 An-Nasâ'i (1276) [2/247], Al-Bukhârî (6328) [11/157] and Muslim (895) [2/337].

17 Al-Bukhârî (757) [2/306] and Muslim (883) [2/329].

18 Muslim (1110) [2/438].

19 *Tasmi'*: Saying "*Sami'allâhu liman hamidah*" i.e. "Allah listens to the one who praises Him," when standing following bowing in prayer.

20 *Tahmid* (in prayer): Saying as a reply to *tasmî*, "*Rabbanâ-walakal-hamd*" i.e. "Our Lord, to You be (All) praise."

21 Al-Bukhârî (689) [2/225] and Muslim (920) [2/351].

22*Basmalah*: Saying, "*Bismillâhir-Rahmânir-Rahîm*" i.e. "In the Name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful."

23 *Ta'mîn*: Saying, "*âmîn*" i.e. "Amen" after the recitation of *Al-Fâtihah* in prayer.

Manner of Prayer

We have dealt with the integral parts, the obligatory acts, and the verbal and the physical acts of the *Sunnah* of prayer. Therefore, we would like now to point out the way prayer is performed, as stated to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH), so as to follow the Prophet's example in this regard and in accordance with the *hadîth* in which he (PBUH) said:

"Perform prayer in the way you see me performing prayer."

Here is the Prophetic way of performing prayer:

- Whenever the Prophet (PBUH) stood for prayer, he faced the *qiblah*,[1] raised his hands making the palms face the *qiblah*, saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*," i.e. "Allah is the Greatest."
- He (PBUH) then holds his left hand with his right one, putting it on his chest.
- Then, he (PBUH) says the opening invocation; he (PBUH) did not observe a certain opening invocations regularly, so it is permissible to say any of the opening invocation reported to have been said by the Prophet (PBUH). Among these invocations is:

"Glory be to You, O Allah, and to You be all praise, and Blessed is Your Name, and Exalted is Your Majesty, and there is no deity (worthy of worship) but You."

The Prophet (PBUH) then says:

"I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the expelled (from the mercy of Allah). In the Name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful."

- Then, he (PBUH) recites *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*, following it with saying "*Âmîn* (Amen)."
- After that, he (PBUH) recites a sura (a long, a short, or a medium one). It is narrated that he (PBUH) used to prolong reciting the Qur'ân in the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer in particular. The Prophet also used to recite publicly in the first two *rak'ahs* of the *Fajr* (Dawn), the *Maghrib* (Sunset), the *'Ishâ'* (Night) Prayers, and recite quietly to himself in any other *rak'ahs*. Moreover, he (PBUH) used to make the recitation of the first *rak'ah* longer than that of the second one in every prayer.
- He (PBUH) then raises his hands in the same way he does while saying the opening *takbîr* of prayer, saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. "Allah is the Greatest"). He then bows putting his hands on his knees firmly, parting between his fingers, and stretching his back, making his head aligned with his back, neither raising nor lowering it, and says, "*Subhâna Rabbiyal-'Azîm*" (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great").
- Then, he (PBUH) raises his head saying, *"Allah listens to the one who praises Him"*, raising both his hands in the same way he does upon bowing.
- After that, he (PBUH) stands up straight saying, (following *tasmî'*),[2] *"Our Lord, to You be (all) the praise."* It is important to point out that the Prophet (PBUH) used to prolong standing following bowing.
- He (PBUH) then says *takbîr* (without raising his hands this time) then prostrates. In prostration, he (PBUH) used to settle his forehead, nose, hands, knees, and the bottom of his toes on the ground (or the place of prayer), making his fingers and toes face the *qiblah*. He (PBUH) used to lean on the palms of his hands during prostration, keeping his upper arms apart from his sides, his abdomen apart from his thighs, and his thighs apart from his legs, saying, "*Subhâna Rabbiyal-A'lâ*"

(i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High"); he (PBUH) used to make his prostration neither long nor short.

- Following the first prostration, he (PBUH) raises his head saying *takbîr*, placing his left foot on its side and sitting on it, keeping the right foot as it was since prostration (i.e. resting on the bottom of its toes while the heel is up). He (PBUH) also places his hands on his thighs saying:

  "O Allah! Forgive me, have mercy on me, set me right, guide me, and sustain me."

- He (PBUH) then says *takbîr* and prostrates, doing in the second prostration the same as he did in the first.

- After that, he (PBUH) raises his head saying *takbîr*, and then he stands upright after resting on the bottom of his toes and leaning on his knees and thighs.

- When he (PBUH) stands upright, he starts recitation, performing the second *rak`ah* in the same way he did in the first.

- At the end of the second *rak`ah*, the Prophet (PBUH) sits for the First *Tashahhud*, placing his left foot on its side and sitting on it just as he does while sitting between the two prostrations. Then he (PBUH) places his right hand on his right thigh and his left hand on his left thigh. He (PBUH) also places the thumb of his right hand on his middle finger making them like a ring, leaving the index finger extended forward as if pointing, and keeps looking at it, reciting the First *Tashahhud*, saying:

  "(All) compliments, prayers and good things are due to Allah; peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the Mercy of Allah and His blessings (be upon you). Peace be upon us and upon the pious servants of Allah. I testify that there is no deity (worthy of worship) but Allah, Alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger."

- He (PBUH) used to make this sitting as short as possible.

- After this, he stands upright saying *takbîr*, performing both the third and the fourth *rak`ah*s just like the first two, but making them shorter; he (PBUH) also recites *Al-Fâtihah* in both the third and the fourth *rak`ah*s.

- He (PBUH) sits for the Final *Tashahhud*, placing his left foot on its side and sitting on it, keeping the right foot as it was since prostration (i.e., resting on the bottom of its toes while the heel is up), or putting his left calf under his right one, keeping his right foot vertical, and sitting on the ground (or the place of prayer) instead.

- Then, he (PBUH) recites the Final *Tashahhud*, which is the same as the first with the following addition:

  "...O Allah! Confer Your blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You conferred Your blessings upon Ibrâhîm (Abraham) and the family of Ibrâhîm. Verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable. And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You blessed Ibrâhîm and the family of Ibrâhîm. Verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable."

- Following the Final *Tashahhud*, he (PBUH) seeks refuge with Allah from the torture of the Fire, from the torture in the grave, from the trial of life and death, and from the evil of the trial of Antichrist. A Muslim may then invoke Allah with invocations mentioned in the Qur'ân and *Sunnah*.

- Finally, he (PBUH) closes prayer with *taslîm*, turning his head to the right saying, "*As-slâmu `alaykum wa rahmatullâh*" (i.e. "Peace and Mercy of Allah be upon you"), then turning to the left saying the same. He (PBUH) used to start uttering *taslîm* while facing the *qiblah* and finish it when he completed turning his head to the right or the left.

- When the Prophet finishes *taslîm*, he says:

  "O Allah! I seek Your forgiveness (thrice). O Allah! You are the Perfection and You are the One Who grants perfection; Blessed are You, O Owner of Majesty and Honor."

- Then, he (PBUH) used to remember Allah with the invocations reported to have been observed by him.

This is, gentle Muslim reader, a brief description of the way the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform prayer according to the texts of *hadîths* mentioned in this regard. Therefore, you should take an interest in your prayer, trying your best to perform it perfectly, following in the Prophet's footsteps as much as possible; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the last day and [who] remembers Allah often."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 21)

May Allah grant us all success and acceptance of our good deeds.

Endnotes

1 The *qiblah*: The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka`bah.

2 *Tasmî`*: Saying "*Sami`allâhu liman hamidah*" i.e. "Allah listens to the one who praises Him," when standing following bowing in prayer.

Prayer: Detestable Acts

It is detestable to turn around with one's face and chest, for the Prophet (PBUH) said about turning around in prayer, as related by Al-Bukhârî:

"It is what Satan steals from the prayer of any one of you."[1]

There are exceptional cases such as turning around in case of fear or for a valid excuse. However, if one turns around with all one's body, or turns his back to the Ka`bah in cases other than fear, one's prayer will be invalid, for one thus turns and does not face the *qiblah* during prayer without a legal excuse. This shows that it is permissible to turn around in prayer only in the case of fear, for it is one of the things that fighting necessitates. So, in cases other than fear, it is permissible to turn with one's face and chest only when necessary. Yet, it is detestable to turn around unnecessarily during prayer, and if one turns around with one's whole body, one's prayer becomes invalid.

It is also detestable to look toward the sky during prayer, as the Prophet (PBUH) disallowed this saying:

"What is wrong with those people who look toward the sky during prayer?"

The Prophet (PBUH) criticized such an act so bitterly that he continued saying:

> *"They should stop (looking toward the sky during prayer) or else their eyesight would be taken away."*[2]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî)

As we have previously mentioned, one should look only at the position of prostrating during prayer. One should never let one's sight wander everywhere during prayer, looking at the walls, engraved patterns, writings, and the like, as this distracts one during prayer.

It is detestable to close one's eyes during prayer unnecessarily, as this is a Jewish practice. Yet, it is not detestable to close one's eyes when necessary, such as closing them to avoid looking at what may distract one during prayer, like decorations, ornaments, etc. This is the opinion Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) mentions in this regard[3].

It is detestable to lean on one's forearms when sitting during prayer, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When you raise your head after prostration, do not squat as a dog squats."*

This *hadîth* is related by Ibn Mâjah,[4] and there are other *hadîth*s stressing the same point.

It is also detestable to lean on a wall or the like when standing during prayer, unless in case of necessity, such as an illness or the like, as leaning on something facilitates standing up.

It is detestable to put one's forearms flat while prostrating, stretching them with elbows touching the ground, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Perform the prostration properly and do not put your forearms flat with elbows touching the ground like a dog."*[5]

It is detestable as well to trifle in prayer, such as playing with one's leg, beard, garment or anything else during prayer, or playing with one's hand on the ground, and so on.

Among the detestable acts is placing one's hands on one's waist during prayer, as such a posture is related to the unbelievers and the arrogant people, and the Prophet (PBUH) forbade Muslims to imitate them; it is authentically stated in a *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim that the Prophet (PBUH) forbade performing prayer with the hands on the waist[6].

Interlacing one's fingers and cracking one's knuckles are also detestable in prayer.

It is also detestable for one to perform prayer while there is some distracting thing in front of one (such as drawings on the prayer mat) as this negatively affects the perfection of one's prayer.

It is detestable to perform prayer in a place where there are paintings or drawings, as this in a way resembles idolatry, be they hung on walls or not, according to the valid view in this regard.

It is detestable to perform prayer while being disturbed by something such as one's need to answer the call of nature (to urinate, excrete or break wind) or being disturbed by extreme hot or cold weather, or extreme hunger or thirst, as such issues hinder one from performing prayer tranquilly and submissively.

It is also detestable to perform prayer in the presence of delicious food one desires, as the Prophet (PBUH) said in the *hadith* related by Muslim:

> *"No prayer should be performed when the food is present, or when one is prompted by the call of nature."*[7]

The Muslim should avoid such detestable issues to observe the obligations decreed by Allah, Exalted be He, devoutly, and to stand before Allah in prayer attentively, tranquilly, and humbly.

It is detestable as well to make prostration restricted to the forehead excluding the nose, as maintained by a group of heretics called the Râfidah,[8] imitating whom is prohibited.

It is also detestable to wipe whatever attaches to one's forehead or nose during prayer following prostration, yet one is allowed to do so after finishing prayer.

During prayer, it is detestable to play with one's beard, to hem one's garment, to clean one's nose, or the like, as this distracts one's attention in prayer.

In brief, Muslims are required to stand before Allah during prayer in full devotion, in both heart and soul, doing nothing that may distract them, for Allah says:

> ***"Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle [i.e. `Asr] prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 238)

Accordingly, Muslims are required to perform prayer attentively, submissively, and devoutly, observing what is decreed to be done therein, and refraining from whatever acts or words that may affect its validity. By doing so, their prayer will be performed properly, both in form and essence. It will be a valid and sufficient prayer.

May Allah guide us all to goodness and felicity in both this world and the Hereafter.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (3291) [6/407].
2 Al-Bukhârî (750) [2/302].
3 See the book of *'Zâdul Ma'âd'* (1/75-76).
4 Ibn Mâjah (896) [1/483].
5 Al-Bukhârî (532) [2/21] and Muslim (1102) [2/433].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1220) [3/115] and Muslim (1218) [2/38].
7 Muslim (1246) [2/49].
8 The *Râfidah*: A Shiite group who refused the caliphates of Abû Bakr As-Siddiq and 'Umar Ibnul-Khattâb and waged accusations against them and against many of the Prophet's Companions as well.

Prayer: Desirable and Permissible Acts

It is an act of the *Sunnah* for the one performing prayer to let no one pass in front of him, for the Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadīth* related by Muslim:

> *"When anyone of you performs prayer, he should not let anyone pass in front of him; if he (the passer) refuses to go, he (the prayer) should turn him away forcibly for there is a devil with him (the passer)."*[1]

However, if there is a concrete object in front of the one performing prayer, such as a wall or the like, it is permissible to let others pass behind that barrier. Similarly, it is permissible for the one performing prayer to let others pass in front of him if the place is not wide enough and they have no other way to pass from; in this case, the one performing prayer should not turn them away if they want to pass in front of him. In addition, if one is performing prayer in the Precinct of Mecca, one should not turn away those passing in front of one, as it was related by the Five Compilers of *Hadīth* that the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform prayer in Mecca while people were passing in front of him and there was no barrier or screen between both[2].

It is an act of the *Sunnah* for the *imâm* (i.e., leader in prayer) or the one praying alone to perform prayer placing a concrete object in front of him as a barrier so as to let no one pass in front of him. This is illustrated in the *hadîth* related by Abû Dâwûd and Ibn Mâjah on the authority of Abû Sa`îd, in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"When any one of you performs prayer, he should have (or place) a concrete object in front of him and keep close to it."*[3]

As for the ones led in prayer, they are screened by their *imâm*, so they do not have to place any concrete object in front of them if their *imâm* does. It is worth mentioning that it is not obligatory for one to place a concrete object as a screen while performing prayer, for Ibn `Abbâs reported:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) performed prayer in an open space without placing a concrete object in front of him as a screen."*[4]
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad and Abû Dâwûd)

The concrete object put in front of one during prayer should be something erect, which is approximately one cubit high, be it thin or wide. It is put, as mentioned above, to hinder anyone from passing in front of one while performing prayer. In case one is performing prayer in a desert, one should perform prayer behind something fixed such as a tree, a stone, a stick, or the like. If one is unable to insert a stick into the ground, it is permissible to put it in front of oneself in a crosswise position.

It is permissible for the ones led in prayer to correct the *imâm* publicly during prayer if the latter makes a mistake while reciting the Qur'ân therein.

During prayer, it is permissible for one to put on a garment and the like, to carry something or put it down, and to kill a snake or a scorpion, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Kill the two black things during prayer: the snake and the scorpion."*[5]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and At-Tirmidhî, and deemed *sâhîh* (authentic) by the latter)

Yet, one should not do many of these permissible acts during prayer unnecessarily. So, if one does such permissible acts excessively, repeatedly, and unnecessarily, one's prayer becomes invalid, as they distract one's attention during prayer.

It is permissible for the one engaged in prayer to draw another's attention to something urgent, such as answering someone knocking at the door, drawing the *imâm*'s attention to the latter's inattention in prayer, warning someone who is in danger, and so on. Still, this is not to be done freely; men are only allowed to say, "*Subhân-Allâh*" (i.e. "Glorified be Allah), and women just to clap when they want to draw someone's attention to something urgent, for the Prophet said:

> *"If some problem arises during prayer, then the men should say, 'Subhân-Allâh' (i.e. Glorified be Allah), and the women should clap."*[6]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

It is not detestable to greet the one performing prayer if the latter knows how to return it; the one performing prayer is allowed to return greetings by means of gesture, not words. In other words, if the one performing prayers returns greeting by speaking, his prayer becomes invalid, as it is regarded among the kinds of human speech which are prohibited during prayer; one is allowed in this case either to return a greeting by gesture or to postpone returning it until one ends prayer with *taslîm*.

It is also permissible for the one performing prayer to recite more than one sura (following the recitation of *Al-Fâtihah*) in one *rak`ah* according to the *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* stating that the Prophet (PBUH) recited the Suras of *Al-Baqarah* (*the Cow*), *An-Nisâ' (Women)*, and *Âlu `Imrân (the Family of `Imrân)* in one *rak`ah* while standing in prayer[7]. It is also permissible for the one performing prayer to recite the same sura in two *rak`ah*s, to divide a sura, reciting it in two *rak`ahs*, or to recite certain parts of a sura (such as the middle or the last verses) during prayer. To illustrate, Imâm Ahmad and Muslim related on the authority of Ibn `Abbâs that the Prophet used to recite the following verse in the first *rak`ah* of the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer[8]:

> ***"Say, [O believers], 'We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us...' "*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 136)

And in the second *rak`ah*:

> ***"... Say, 'O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you...' "*** (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 64)

Moreover, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... So recite what is easy [for you] of the Qur'ân..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Muzzammil: 20)

Yet, a Muslim should not keep doing so (i.e. reciting certain verses of the Qur'ân during prayer), but it is permissible to do it from time to time.

During prayer, it is permissible for one to seek refuge with Allah from the Fire when reciting or listening to a verse in which the torment of the Fire is mentioned, and to ask Allah for mercy when reciting or listening to a verse in which Allah's mercy is mentioned. Likewise, it is permissible for the one performing prayer to ask Allah to confer His blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH) when reciting or listening to a verse in which the Prophet (PBUH) is mentioned, as this is what the Prophet (PBUH) enjoined (us) to do whenever he is mentioned.

Gentle reader, these are in brief the desirable and the permissible acts to be observed during prayer. We have pointed them out so that you may benefit from them and observe them when performing prayer, and be aware of the rulings of your religion on prayer. We invoke Allah to grant all of us more useful knowledge and guide us to the righteous good deeds.

To conclude, a Muslim should know that prayer is a great act of worship, during which it is not permissible to do or say anything other than what is enjoined by Allah's Messenger (PBUH). Therefore, you should, gentle reader, be keen on the perfection of your prayer, and be aware of what makes it perfect and what makes it imperfect, so as to ensure performing it in the best way ever.

Endnotes

1 Muslim (1130) [2/447].
2 Abû Dâwûd (2016) [2/354]; An-Nasâ'î (757) [1/400] and Ibn Mâjah (2958) [3/440].
3 Abû Dâwûd (698) [1/316] and Ibn Mâjah (954) [1/510].
4 Abû Dâwûd (718) [1/324]; An-Nasâ'î (752) [2/398] and Al-Bayhaqî (3480) [2/387].
5 Abû Dâwûd (921) [1/369]; At-Tirmidhi (390) [2/233]; An-Nasâ'î (1203) [2/14] and Ibn Mâjah (1245) [2/82].
6 Al-Bukhârî (719) [13/225] and Muslim (948) [2/365].
7 Muslim (1811) [3/303].
8 Muslim (1689) [3/249].

Prostration of Forgetfulness

Man is subject to forgetfulness and inattention, and Satan is eager to distract a Muslim from his prayer through whispering distractive thoughts to turn him away. This may cause one's prayer to be incomplete or over-performed, out of inattention and distraction. Therefore, Allah has ordained Muslims to prostrate at the end of prayer in case of inattention in order to please Allah, the Most Gracious, to defeat Satan, and to make up for whatever decrease or addition made inattentively in one's prayer. Such a prostration is called, by scholars, "Prostration of Forgetfulness." It is worth mentioning that the Prophet (PBUH) once forgot while performing prayer; this is one of the signs of Allah's favor upon the Muslim nation to guide them to the perfection of their religion through following the example of the Prophet (PBUH), and to follow in his footsteps when they inattentively err during prayer.

It is authentically narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) sometimes forgot while performing prayer. To illustrate, he (PBUH) once ended a four-*rak`ah* prayer with *taslîm* after performing only two *rak`ah*s (instead of four) and then offered the prostration of forgetfulness in compensation[1]. It is also narrated

that he (PBUH) once ended a four-*rak`ah* prayer with *taslîm* after performing only three *rak`ahs* (units of prayer)[2]. Another time, he (PBUH) forgot to sit for the First *Tashahhud* in the second *rak`ah* of a prayer and prostrated for forgetfulness afterwards[3]. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When any one of you forgets (i.e. errs inattentively during prayer), he should perform two prostrations."*[4]

Prostration of Forgetfulness is to be performed in three cases:

1- When one inattentively performs something additional during prayer

2- When one inattentively misses something integral in prayer

3- When one is uncertain whether he has performed something additional or missed some integral part in prayer

So, a Muslim is to perform the prostration of forgetfulness in any of the above-mentioned three cases according to the authentic proofs stated in the *Sunnah*, yet not for every unintentional decrease, addition, or doubt during prayer. The prostration of forgetfulness can be performed in both obligatory and supererogatory prayers, as generally indicated in the legal proofs in this regard.

The first case (that obligates the prostration of forgetfulness) is when a Muslim absentmindedly adds **acts or words** to his prayer. Concerning the addition of acts, if one inattentively adds acts which are considered integral parts of prayer, such as standing instead of sitting or vice versa or performing extra bowing or prostration, one has to perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness in compensation. This is because it was narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas`ûd that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When one (inattentively) adds or omits something in one's prayer, one should perform two prostrations."*[5]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)

Since addition in prayer causes the imperfection of one's performance of prayer, the prostration of forgetfulness has been ordained to make up for such imperfection. Likewise, if one absentmindedly performs an extra *rak`ah* and does not remember until he finishes prayer, then one must perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness. Yet, when one remembers while performing this additional *rak`ah*, one has to sit immediately, recite *Tashahhud* (if one has not already recited it), perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness, and then end prayer with *taslîm*.

If an *imâm* (one who leads a congregational prayer) inattentively adds such acts to a congregational prayer, men performing prayer behind him must draw his attention by saying "*Subhân-Allâh*" (Glory be to Allah), but women can only clap their hands. Then, it is obligatory for the *imâm* to respond to them unless he is sure he is right; this is the legal way to be followed. Also, the people led in prayer must draw the attention of the *imâm* in the same way if he inattentively omits any of the acts of prayer.

As for a **verbal** addition in prayer, if a Muslim absentmindedly recites something inopportunely during prayer, such as reciting some verses of the Qur'ân while bowing or prostrating, or reciting a sura following *Al-Fâtihah* while standing in the last two *rak'ahs* of a four-*rak'ah* prayer or in the third *rak'ah* of the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer, it is desirable for a Muslim in such cases to perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness.

The second case (that obligates the prostration of forgetfulness) is when a Muslim inattentively misses any of the acts of prayer. If the missed act is one of the integral parts of prayer, such as the opening *takbîr*, one's prayer becomes null and the prostration of forgetfulness does not make up for it. If it is an integral part other than the opening *takbîr*, such as a bowing or a prostration, and one remembers before starting another *rak'ah*, one then must go back to it and perform it first, and then perform what comes after it. Yet, if one remembers such a missed integral part after starting another *rak'ah*, this missed act nullifies the *rak'ah* in which it was omitted so the whole *rak'ah* must be re-performed before ending prayer with *taslîm* and then the prostration of forgetfulness is to be performed. This is because the missing integral part cannot be made up for during the same *rak'ah* in this case. Still, if one remembers that missed integral part after *taslîm*, it is considered a complete, missed *rak'ah*, and one in this case must re-perform it individually, perform the prostration of forgetfulness, then end it with *taslîm*, provided the remembrance is soon enough and one's ablution is still valid. However, if one remembers the missed integral part after a long interval after *taslîm*, or when one's ablution is invalidated, one must re-perform the whole prayer.

In case the missed integral part is the Final *Tashahhud* or *taslîm*, it is not regarded as missing a full *rak'ah*, so one has only to perform it, offer the two prostrations of forgetfulness, and then end prayer with *taslîm*. On the other hand, if one misses the First *Tashahhud* and remembers it before completely standing upright for the following *rak'ah*, one can go back to perform it. But if one has already stood upright, it is detestable for one to sit to perform it, yet if he sits it does not nullify one's prayer. However, if one has already stood

upright and started recitation, it is prohibited for one then to sit to perform it (i.e. the missed First *Tashahhud*). This is because one in this case is already engaged in another integral part of prayer (which is recitation) that must not be interrupted.

If one misses glorifying Allah while bowing or prostrating, one has to go back and do it unless one has completely stood upright for the following *rak`ah*. After that, one is to perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness (before *taslîm*) and then end the prayer with *taslîm*.

The third case (that obligates the prostration of forgetfulness) is when one doubts whether one has added or missed some parts of one's prayer. If one is uncertain about the number of *rak`ah*s one has performed (whether one has performed two or three *rak`ah*s for example), one has to proceed taking the smaller number of *rak`ah*s for granted and base one's prayer on that assumption. Then, one completes one's prayer and performs the two prostrations of forgetfulness before *taslîm*. So, the original ruling here is that one is to re-perform what one is uncertain about whether one has performed it or not. This ruling is implied in the following *hadîth* narrated by `Abdur-Rahmân Ibn `Awf (may Allah be pleased with him):

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'When anyone of you is in doubt whether he has performed one or two rak`ahs (i.e. uncertain about the number of rak`ahs he performed), he should regard it as (only) one. Also, when one is in doubt whether he has performed two or three rak`ahs, he should regard them as two (rak`ahs).'"*[6]
>
> (Related by Imâms Ahmad, Muslim, and At-Tirmidhî)

In a congregational prayer, if a Muslim is uncertain whether he has joined the prayer from the first *rak`ah* or the second, he is to consider it from the second *rak`ah*, and perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness at the end of his prayer. Likewise, when one joins a congregational prayer late and is uncertain whether one has caught a full *rak`ah* or not, one is to disregard this *rak`ah* (i.e. it must be re-performed) and then one performs two prostrations of forgetfulness at the end of one's prayer.

To conclude, if one doubts that one has missed an integral part of prayer, one has to go back and perform it, then perform what comes after it within the same *rak`ah*, as mentioned above in detail. Yet, if the doubt concerns an obligatory act of prayer, not an integral part, it has to be disregarded and one then is not obliged to perform the two prostrations of forgetfulness. Moreover,

when doubt is related to addition, not omission, such doubt is to be disregarded, as the original ruling is to offer the prostration of forgetfulness to make up for inattentive omission, not addition, in prayer.

These are the rulings on prostration of forgetfulness in brief, and whoever seeks more elaboration, he may refer to the books on *fiqhî* rulings. May Allah grant us success.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhâri (482) [1/731] and Muslim (1288) [3/69].
2 Muslim (1293) [3/73].
3 Al-Bukhâri (829) [2/400] and Muslim (1269) [3/60].
4 Muslim (1283) [3/67].
5 Muslim (1287) [3/69].
6 Muslim (1272) [3/62]; Ahmad (1655) [1/236]; At-Tirmidhî (398) [2/244] and Ibn Mâjah (1209) [2/63].

Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) Following Prayer

Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance - and exalt Him morning and afternoon."***

(Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 41-42)

Allah, Glorified be He, has enjoined *dhikr* (Remembrance of Allah) to be said following the different acts of worship. To illustrate, Allah, Glorified be He, says regarding prayer:

> ***"And when you have completed the prayer, remember Allah standing, sitting, or [lying] on your sides..."***

(Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 103)

Allah, Glorified be He, also says:

> ***"And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often that you may succeed."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Jumu`ah: 10)

As for fasting, Allah commands Muslims to remember and glorify Him after completing the fasting of the month of Ramadân; Allah, Glorified be He, says:

> ***"... to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

The same goes for *Hajj* (Pilgrimage); Allah commands Muslims to remember Him after performing the rites of *Hajj* saying:

> ***"And when you have completed your rites, remember Allah like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 200)

This Divine Command (i.e. to remember Allah following acts of worship) may be decreed to help a Muslim make up for any imperfection or evil whisperings affecting the act of worship he performs. It may also be decreed to make a Muslim feel that he is legally required to continue remembering and worshiping Allah, and that his legal duty (towards Allah) is not restricted to the performance of acts of (obligatory) worship.

A Muslim has to follow the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) in remembering Allah (saying *dhikr*) following obligatory prayers, not to follow the invented ways of Sufi groups who are innovators in religion. It is stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that Thawbân (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"Whenever Allah's Messenger (PBUH) finished performing prayer he used to ask Allah's Forgiveness thrice then say, 'O Allah, You are the Perfection and You are the One Who grants perfection; Blessed are You, O Owner of Majesty and Honor.' "*[1]

In addition, it is stated in the Two *Sahîhs*,[2] on the authority of Al-Mughîrah Ibn Shu`bah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) used to say following prayer:

> *"There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over*

all things Omnipotent. O Allah! None can withhold what You grant, and none can grant what You withhold, and the fortune of a man of means is useless before You (i.e. only good deeds are of value)."[3]

It is also stated in Sahîh *Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, on the authority of `Abdullâh Ibnuz-Zubayr (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (PBUH) used to say following every prayer:

"*There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent. There is neither might nor power except in Allah. There is no deity but Allah and we worship none but Him, Alone. To Him belong all bounties, to Him belongs all grace, and to Him is worthy praise accorded. There is no deity but Allah; we are sincere to Him in religion, although the disbelievers dislike it.*"[4]

Moreover, it is stated in the *Sunan*,[5] on the authority of Abû Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"*Whoever says ten times immediately after finishing the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, before moving from his place or talking to anyone, 'There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise. He gives life and causes death, and He is over all things Omnipotent,' ten good deeds will be recorded for him, ten sins will be eliminated from him, he will be upgraded ten degrees (in reward), he will be safeguarded from all kinds of harm all that day, he will be guarded against Satan, and no sin can overtake him on that day (and nullify his good deeds) except associating others in worship with Allah.*"[6]

At-Tirmidhî commented on this *hadîth* **saying,** "*This is a hasan, sahîh hadîth (i.e. a good and authentic hadîth).*" Likewise, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to say the aforesaid supplication of *dhikr* ten times following the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer, according to a *hadîth* related by Imâm Ahmad on the authority of Umm Salamah,[7] and another *hadîth* stated in *Sahîh Ibn Hibbân (Ibn Hibbân's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* on the authority of Abû Ayyûb Al-Ansârî[8]. Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to say seven times following the *Fajr* and the *Maghrib* Prayers:

"*O my Lord, protect me from the Fire.*"[9]

This is according to the *hadîths* related by Imâms Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, An-Nasâ'î, Ibn Mâjah and other compilers of *Hadîth*.

Among the ways of *dhikr* is saying, "*Subhân-Allâh*" (Glory be to Allah), "*Al-hamdu-lillâh*" (Praise be to Allah), "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (Allah is the Greatest) respectively thirty-three times each, and then saying to complete a hundred:

> *"There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent."*

It is stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone extols Allah (saying, 'Subhân-Allâh' i.e. 'Glory be to Allah') after (performing) every prayer thirty-three times, and praises Allah (saying, 'Al-hamdu-lillâh' i.e. 'Praise be to Allah') thirty-three times, and declares His Greatness (saying, 'Allâhu-Akbar' i.e. 'Allah is the Greatest') thirty-three times, ninety-nine times in all, and says to complete a hundred: 'There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent,' his sins will be forgiven even if they are as abundant as the foam of the sea."*[10]

After saying that *dhikr* following the performance of prayer, it is preferred for a Muslim to recite the following suras and verses:

1. *Âyatul-Kursî* (i.e. the Verse of *the Throne*)[11]
2. The Sura of *Al-Ikhlâs* (*Sincerity of Faith*)[12]
3. The Sura of *Al-Falaq* (*Daybreak*)[13]
4. The Sura of *An-Nâs* (*Mankind*)[14]

An-Nasâ'î and At-Tabarânî related on the authority of Abû Umâmah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever recites Âyatul-Kursî (i.e. the Verse of the Throne) following (performing) every prayer, nothing will be between him and (entering) Paradise but death."*[15]

This means that nothing delays him from entering Paradise except being alive. In another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever recites Âyatul-Kursî following (performing) every prayer will be in Allah's covenant of protection until the following prayer."*[16]

It is also stated in the *Sunan* that `Uqbah Ibn `Âmir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) commanded me to recite Al-Mu`awwidhatân (the Suras of Al-Falaq (Daybreak) and An-Nâs (Mankind)) following every prayer."*[17]

All the aforementioned honorable *hadîths* state the legality of these religious supplications of *dhikr* following obligatory prayers, and the great rewards prepared for those who observe them. So, we should keep on observing them, following in the footsteps of the Prophet (PBUH). We should also bear in mind that they are to be said after concluding prayers with *taslîm* (i.e. immediately after finishing performing prayers), before moving from the place where we have performed prayer.

Immediately after concluding prayer with *taslîm*, these supplications of *dhikr* are to be said in the following sequence:

- Asking Allah's Forgiveness three times
- Saying, *"O Allah, You are the Perfection and You are the One Who grants perfection; Blessed are You, O Owner of Majesty and Honor."*
- Saying, *"There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent. O Allah! None can withhold what You grant, and none can grant what You withhold, and the fortune of a man of means is useless before You (i.e. only good deeds are of value)."*
- Saying, *"There is neither might nor power except in Allah. There is no deity but Allah and we worship none but Him, Alone. To Him belong all bounties, to Him belongs all grace, and to Him is worthy praise accorded. There is no deity but Allah; we are sincere to Him in religion, although the disbelievers dislike it."*
- Saying, "*Subhân-Allâh*" (Glory be to Allah), "*Al-hamdu-lillâh*" (Praise be to Allah), "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (Allah is the Greatest) respectively thirty-three times each, and then saying to complete a hundred, *"There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent."*
- Saying ten times following the *Fajr* (Dawn) and the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayers, *"There is no deity but Allah, Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise. He gives life and causes death, and He is over all things Omnipotent,"* then saying seven times, *"O my Lord, protect me from the Hellfire."*

- Reciting *Âyatul-Kursî* (the Verse of the Throne), and the Suras of *Al-Ikhlâs* (*Sencerity of Faith*) and *Al-Mu`awwidhatân* (the Suras of *Al-Falaq* (*Daybreak*) and *An-Nâs* (*Mankind*)). It is also desirable to recite each of these suras three times following the *Fajr* (Dawn) and the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayers.

- Following prayers, it is also desirable to say *tahlîl*,[18] *tasbîh*,[19] *tahmîd*,[20] and *takbîr*[21] aloud, individually not chorally. To count saying *tasbîh*, *tahmîd*, and *takbîr* thirty-three times each, one can use one's fingers, as they will be questioned (by Allah) and will speak and testify about one's deeds on the Day of Judgment. It is also permissible to use a rosary instead of one's fingers for that purpose, provided one is aware that it by no means has a special virtue over using one's fingers. Still, using a rosary is deemed detestable by some scholars. So, if a Muslim believes that a rosary used for counting the times of the aforesaid *dhikr* has any special virtue or superiority, it becomes an innovation in religion, as is the case with the Sufis who wear rosaries as necklaces or make them like bracelets in their hands. This aforementioned behavior is not only an innovation in religion, but it is also a kind of ostentation and affectation.

- After finishing the aforesaid supplications of *dhikr*, a Muslim should invoke Allah secretly asking Him for whatever he desires, for invocation after performing prayer and saying those glorious supplications of *dhikr* is more likely to be granted by Allah. It is prohibited for a Muslim to raise his hands while invoking Allah after obligatory prayers as some people mistakenly do, for this is an act of innovation in religion; this may sometimes be done after supererogatory prayers. Similarly, A Muslim should not raise his voice while invoking Allah, so as to be nearer to sincerity and submissiveness and far away from ostentation.

In some countries, some people are used to raising their voices and hands chorally while invoking Allah after performing prayer, and sometimes the *imâm* (one who leads people in prayer) invokes Allah while raising his voice and hands, and the attendants reply "Âmîn (amen)," raising their voices and hands as well. Such a practice is an abominable innovation in religion, as it has neither been narrated to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH) following prayers - be it the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer, the *`Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer, or any other obligatory prayer - nor deemed desirable by any Muslim. **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** said[22] in this regard:

> *"Whoever reported that Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î deemed it desirable (i.e. deemed raising the voices and hands chorally in supplication desirable) must have misquoted him."*

According to the above, we have to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (PBUH) and stick to his *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Hashr: 7)

Allah, Glorified be He, also says:

> ***"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the last day and [who] remembers Allah often."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 21)

Endnotes

1 Muslim (1333) [3/92].
2 The Two *Sahihs*: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
3 Al-Bukhârî (844) [2/420] and Muslim (1337) [3/93].
4 Muslim (1342) [3/94].
5 The *Sunan* refers to compilations of the Prophetic *hadiths* classified according to the Islamic jurisprudential subjects; the main four compilers of the *Sunan* are Abû Dâwûd, Ibn Mâjah, At-Tirmidhî and An-Nasâ'î.
6 At-Tirmidhî (3484) [5/515].
7 Ahmad (26430) [6/298] and Haythamî mentioned, in his book *Majma` Az-Zawâ'id* (*The Collection of Additional Hadîths*), deemad it *hasan hadîth* (10/108).
8 Ibn Hibban (2023) [5/369].
9 Abû Dâwûd (5079) [5/200].
10 Muslim (1351) [3/97].
11 Verse No. 255 of the Sura of *Al-Baqarah* (*the Cow*); Chapter No. 2 of the Qur'ân.
12 Chapter No. 112 of the Qur'ân.
13 Chapter No. 113 of the Qur'ân.
14 Chapter No. 114 of the Qur'ân, i.e., the last Chapter of the Qur'ân.
15 An-Nasâ'î in his book *`Amal Al-Yawm Wal-Laylah* (Supplications of the Day and Night) (100); At-Tabarânî in his book *Al-Mu`jam Al-Kabîr* (The Great Lexicon) (7532) [8/114] and Ibnus-Sunnî in his book *`Amal Al-Yawm Wal-Laylah* (Supplications of the Day and Night) (124).

16 At-Tabarânî in his book *Al-Mu`jam Al-Kabîr* (*The Great Lexicon*) (2733) [3/83-84].
17 Abû Dâwûd (1523) [2/123]; At-Tirmidhî (2908) [5/171] and An-Nasâ'î (1335) [2/77].
18 *Tahlîl*: Saying, "*Lâ Ilâha illallâh*" (i.e. There is no deity but Allah).
19 *Tasbîh*: Saying, "*Subhân-Allâh*" (i.e. Glory be to Allah).
20 *Tahmîd*: Saying, "*Al-hamdu-lillâh*" (i.e. Praise be to Allah).
21 *Takbîr*: Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
22 See: '*Majmû`ul Fatâwâ*' (22/512).

Voluntary Prayer

We should know that our Lord, Glorified and Exalted be He, has ordained voluntary prayers, side by side with the obligatory ones, as a means for His servants to draw near to Him. Performing voluntary prayers is considered among the best means of bringing oneself nearer to Allah. It ranks next to jihâd (fighting or striving in the Cause of Allah) and seeking knowledge, for the Prophet (PBUH) always drew himself near to Allah by means of voluntary prayers as he (PBUH) said:

> *"Keep on the right course and (know that) you will not be able to do all good acts; and know that the best of your (good) deeds is prayer."*[1]

Prayer combines different acts of worship such as reciting the Noble Qur'ân, bowing, prostrating, supplicating Allah, being humble and submissive to Him, imploring and glorifying Him, declaring His greatness (by saying *takbîr*), and praying to Him to confer His blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH).

Generally, voluntary prayers are of two types:

The first is called "regular supererogatory prayers," as they have specified times of performance, and **the second** is called "non-regular supererogatory prayers," whose performance is not restricted to certain times. The first type of voluntary prayers has some subcategories of which some are more stressed than others; the most stressed of them are the *Witr* Prayer,[2] the *Tarâwîh* Prayer,[3] the Prayer for Rain, and the Eclipse Prayer respectively. Each of these prayers will be dealt with separately in detail in the following chapters, Allah willing.

Endotes

1 Ibn Mâjah (277) [1/178]; Ahmad (22278) [5/277] and Al-Hâkim. Al-Hâkim graded it as authentic, and Adh-Dhahabî was of the same opinion as that of Al-Hâkim. Al-Albânî also graded it as authentic in his book *'Sahihul Jâmi`'* (952).

2 The *Witr* Prayer: A supererogatory prayer consisting of an odd number of *rak`ahs* (one, three, five, seven, nine, eleven or thirteen) and it is performed any time between the *`Ishâ'* (Night) and the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayers.

3 The *Tarâwîh* Prayer: Supererogatory prayer performed after the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer during the month of Ramadân.

Witr Prayer

Let us start with the Witr Prayer since it is important, as it is the most stressed voluntary prayer, and some scholars are of the opinion that it is obligatory to perform it. Generally, the act of worship whose incumbency is disputable is more stressed than any other act which is agreed to be not obligatory. Muslims agree on the legality of the Witr Prayer so it should not be abandoned. The testimony of whoever insists on leaving this prayer is not to be accepted. **Imâm Ahmad says,** *"Whoever abandons (performing) the Witr Prayer intentionally is a bad man whose testimony is not to be accepted."*[1] Ahmad and Abû Dâwûd relate as *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"Whoever does not perform the Witr Prayer does not belong to us."[2]

'The *Witr*' is the name of the *rak`ah* (unit of prayer) separated from its preceding *rak`ahs*, or three, five, seven, nine, or eleven (continuous) *rak`ahs* (performed with only one final *taslîm*). If these *rak`ahs* are separated by two or more *taslîms* (final *Salâms* in prayer), the *Witr* is the *rak`ah* separated alone. The time for the *Witr* Prayer starts immediately after the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer and continues until dawn. In the Two *Sahîhs*, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) says:

"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) performed the Witr Prayer at different nights at various hours extending (from the Night Prayer) up to the last hour of the night."[3]

It is stated in many *hadîths* that the time of performing the *Witr* Prayer is the whole night except the time before the *'Ishâ'* Prayer. If a Muslim is sure to wake up late at the last time of the night, it is desirable for him to perform the *Witr* Prayer then; however, if he is not certain (to be awake at this time), he should perform this prayer before going to bed as recommended by the Prophet (PBUH). Imâm Muslim relates on the authority of Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"If anyone of you is afraid that he may not be able to get up at the end of the night, let him perform the Witr Prayer and then sleep. And if he is confident of getting up and performing prayer at night, then let him perform it at the end of it, for the recitation (of the Qur'ân) at the end of the night is witnessed (by angels), which is better."[4]

The *Witr* Prayer can be as short as one *rak'ah* (unit of prayer) according to the *hadîths* (related to this ruling) and as narrated from ten of the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all). Yet, it is desirable to perform the *Shaf'*[5] before the *Witr* Prayer. The *rak'ahs* of the *Witr* Prayer can be as many as eleven or thirteen, uttering *taslîm* at the end of every two *rak'ahs* and performing the *Witr* with a single *rak'ah*. Imâm Muslim relates that 'Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates:

"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) used to perform eleven rak'ahs at night, performing the Witr with a single rak'ah."[6]

In another narration, she says:

"...uttering taslîm at the end of every two rak'ahs and performing the Witr with a single one."[7]

Moreover, a Muslim is permitted to perform eleven continuous *rak'ahs*, with one *Tashahhud* in the tenth *rak'ah* and another *Tashahhud* in the eleventh, and then end his prayer with *taslîm*. Also, he may perform eleven continuous *rak'ahs* with only one *Tashahhud* in the last one (before ending his prayer with *taslîm*). Yet, the first way of performing the *Witr* Prayer is more desirable.

Besides, a Muslim is permitted to perform nine continuous *rak'ahs*, with a *Tashahhud* in the eighth *rak'ah* and another in the ninth, and then end his prayer with *taslîm*. He also may perform seven or five continuous *rak'ahs*, with one *Tashahhud* in the end after which he is to end the prayer with *taslîm*. Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) used to perform the Witr with five or seven rak'ahs (units of prayer) without talking or uttering taslîm between them."[8]

A different way to perform the *Witr* Prayer is to perform two *rak'ahs* and say *taslîm* then perform a single (last) one.

It is desirable to recite the Sura of *Al-A'lâ (the Most High)*[9] in the first *rak'ah*, the Sura of *Al-Kâfirûn* (*the Disbelievers*)[10] in the second and the Sura of *Al-Ikhlâs* (*Sincerity of Faith*)[11] in the third.

Therefore, it became evident that it is permitted to perform eleven, thirteen, nine, seven, five, three, or one *rak'ah*, yet the highly desirable is to perform eleven *rak'ahs* and the least desirable is three *rak'ahs*, but it is sufficient to perform only one *rak'ah*. In addition to this, it is desirable to recite *qunût* (invocation) after rising from bowing in the last *rak'ah*, invoking Allah and saying the following supplication related about the Prophet (PBUH):

"O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided..."[12]

Endnotes

1 See: '*Majmû'ul Fatâwâ*' [23/127, 253].
2 Ahmad (9678) [2/443] and Abû Dâwûd (1419) [2/87].
3 Al-Bukhâri (996) [2/626] and Muslim (1734) [3/267].
4 Muslim (1764) [3/277].
5 The *Shaf'*: It generally refers to any prayer consisting of an even number of *rak'ahs*, and it particularly refers to the even number of *rak'ahs* performed before the final *rak'ah* of the *Witr* Prayer.
6 Muslim (1714) [3/259].
7 Muslim (1715) [3/259].
8 An-Nasâ'î (1713) [3/266] and Ibn Mâjah (1192) [2/55].
9 Chapter No. 87 of the Qur'ân.
10 Chapter No. 109 of the Qur'ân.
11 Chapter No. 112 of the Qur'ân.
12 Abû Dâwûd (1425) [2/90]; At-Tirmidhî (463) [2/328]; An-Nasâ'î (1744) [3/275] and Ibn Mâjah (1178) [2/49].

Tarâwîh Prayer

The *Tarâwîh* Prayer (Nightly Supererogatory Prayer during the month of Ramadân) is among what Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has ordained for Muslims in Ramadân, and it is a stressed act of the *Sunnah*. It is called 'the *Tarâwîh*' which means in Arabic 'intervals of relaxation,' because Muslims used to take an interval of relaxation after every four *rak`has*[1] of the *Tarâwîh* Prayer as they used to prolong the prayer. It is more desirable to perform the *Tarâwîh* Prayer in congregation in the mosque, as the Prophet (PBUH) led his Companions in performing the *Tarâwîh* Prayer for some nights then he stopped for fear that it (i.e. the *Tarâwîh* Prayer) might become a burden on Muslims. In the Two *Sahîhs*, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"One night, Allah's Messenger (PBUH) performed prayer in the mosque and some people followed him. The next night he also performed prayer and too many people gathered. On the third or the fourth night, more people gathered, but Allah's Messenger (PBUH) did not come out to them. In the morning he said, 'I saw what you were doing and nothing but the fear that it (i.e. the prayer) might be enjoined on you, stopped me from coming to you.'"*[2]

In the narration of Al-Bukhârî the words "*...and that happened in the month of Ramadân*" were added. It is well-known that the Companions performed the *Tarâwîh* Prayer after the death of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslim nation has accepted and followed this practice.

The Prophet (PBUH) says:

> "*Whoever stands (performing prayer) with the imâm until he finishes prayer, (the reward for) performing prayer all the night will be recorded for him.*"[3]

The Prophet (PBUH) also says:

> "*Whoever performs prayer during the nights of Ramadân faithfully out of sincere faith and hoping for Divine reward (not for showing off), all his past sins will be forgiven.*"[4]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Thus, performing the *Tarâwîh* Prayer is a stated (stressed) act of the *Sunnah* that a Muslim should not leave.

Concerning the number of *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) performed in this prayer, nothing definite is narrated about the Prophet (PBUH) and hence Muslims are free to choose. **Shâykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:**

> "*A Muslim can perform twenty rak`ahs (in the Tarâwîh Prayer) according to the famous opinion of the Hanbalî and Shâfi`î Schools, thirty six rak`ahs with regard to the Mâlikî School, eleven rak`ahs, or thirteen. Thus, all is good and a Muslim can perform more or less rak`ahs according to the (long or short) time of his standing reciting the Qur'ân.*"[5]

When `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) gathered Muslims to perform the *Tarâwîh* Prayer in congregation behind Ubayy Ibn Ka`b, the latter performed twenty *rak`ahs*. Some of the Companions used to perform more *rak`ahs* and other Companions performed less. So, there is no definite text related about the Prophet (PBUH) determining a certain number of *rak`ahs* to be performed in the *Tarâwîh* Prayer. Many *imâms* of mosques perform the *Tarâwîh* Prayer without paying attention or feeling tranquil while bowing or prostrating. Feeling tranquil is an integral part of prayer and a Muslim must pay attention while standing before Allah, Exalted be He, and learn from the Words of Allah (i.e. the Qur'ân) while they are being recited. Of course, a Muslim cannot fulfill this when performing prayer with detestable haste. It is more befitting to perform ten *rak`ahs* in a state of tranquility and recite the

Noble Qur'ân for a long time than to perform twenty *rak`ahs* with detestable haste. This is because the essence of prayer is to turn one's heart to Allah, Exalted and Ever Majestic be He. Verily, a few *rak`ahs* (with tranquility and reflection) can outweigh so many ones. Also, it is better to recite the Qur'ân with measured recitation than recite it with haste. It is allowable to be quick in reciting the Qur'ân provided that no letter is neglected since it is prohibited to neglect a letter for the sake of quick recitation. However, it is good for an *imâm* (in congregational prayer) to recite the Qur'ân in a way that benefits those performing prayer behind him. Allah dispraises those who recite the Qur'ân without understanding its meaning as Allah, Exalted be He, reveals:

> ***"And among them are unlettered ones who do not know the Scripture except [indulgence in] wishful thinking..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 78)

The verse refers to those people who recite (the Book) without understanding its meaning. Allah has revealed the Qur'ân for Muslims to understand its meaning and carry out its rulings, not only to recite it.

Some *imâms* of mosques do not perform the *Tarâwîh* Prayer as it should be performed, for they recite the Qur'ân so hastily that they violate the sound reciting of the Qur'ân. Moreover, they do not feel tranquil while standing, bowing, or prostrating though feeling tranquil is an integral part of prayer. Furthermore, they may perform only a few *rak`ahs* (units of prayer). That is, those *imâms* combine many detestable acts which are performing only a few *rak`ahs*, shortening the time of prayer, and reciting the Qur'ân in a bad way. Thus, they perform worship heedlessly[6]. They must fear Allah, establish their prayer well, and not deprive themselves and those (performing prayer) behind them from performing the *Tarâwîh* Prayer according to the legal way[7]. We invoke Allah to guide all Muslims to success.

Endnotes

1 The *Tarâwîh* Prayer is to be performed in two *rak`ahs* successively the same as *Tahajjud* (the Night Vigil Prayer). Some *imâms* of mosques who are not well-versed in *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) may not say *taslîm* after every two *rak`ahs* in the *Tarâwîh* or *Tahajjud*, which is wrong and contradictory to the *Sunnah*. Scholars state that whoever stands to perform a third *rak`ah* in the *Tarâwîh* or *Tahajjud* is the same as him who (mistakenly) stands to perform a third *rak`ah* in the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer (which consists only of two *rak`ahs*). Thus, his prayer is invalid. Sheikh `Abdul-`Aziz Ibn Bâz (may Allah have mercy on him) has composed a reply to those people in which he shows their fault.

2 Al-Bukhârî (1129) [3/14] and Muslim (1780) [3/283].

3 Abû Dâwûd (1375) [2/71]; At-Tirmidhî (805) [3/169]; An-Nasâ'î (1363) [2/93] and Ibn Mâjah (1327) [2/122].

4 Al-Bukhârî (37) [1/124] and Muslim (1776) [3/282].

5 See: *'Al-Akhbâr Al-`Ilmiyyah min Al-Ikhtiyarât Al-Fiqhiyyah'* written by Shâykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah.

6 Some of the *imâms* of mosques raise their voices in recitation of the Qur'ân using loudspeakers, thus, they confuse the people performing prayer in other mosques; a thing which is not permissible. Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

"If there is anyone reciting the Qur'ân while the people are performing supererogatory prayer, he should not raise his voice in a way that may distract their attention. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) came out to his Companions while they were performing prayer in the mosque and said to them, 'O people, everyone of you is calling his Lord, so let no one of you raise his voice in recitation over others.' "

7 Some of the *imâms* of mosques become in haste while reciting the Qur'ân in the *Tarâwîh* Prayer in order to finish reciting all the Qur'ân by the beginning of the last ten days of Ramadân or by the middle of them (the last ten days of Ramadân). When he finishes the Qur'ân, he leaves the mosque and travels to perform *`Umrah* (Lesser Pilgrimage) leaving another *imâm* instead of him who may not be fit to undertake the duties of the *imâm*. This is a great mistake that wastes the duty he is assumed to undertake, which is leading the people in prayer until the end of Ramadân. Doing his duty (i.e. leading the people in prayer) is a duty upon the *imâm* while performing *`Umrah* is only a desirable act. Thus, it is not right to abandon a duty for the sake of a desirable act. This is because staying at his mosque to perform the duty he is charged with is better than performing *`Umrah*. Some other *imâms* start shortening the time of prayer and the recitation when they finish reciting the Qur'ân. They do this in the last nights of Ramadân which are the nights of emancipation from the Hellfire. It is as if these *imâms* consider that what is meant from the *Tarâwîh* Prayer and *Tahajjud* (Night Vigil Prayer) is only finishing the recitation of the Qur'ân not spending these blessed nights in standing for prayer, following the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (PBUH) and seeking to have the merit of these nights. This is a sign of their ignorance, which shows their heedlessness to acts of worship. We ask Allah to return them to what is right.

Sunnah Râtibah: Prayers Performed along with Obligatory Prayers

You should know, my dear Muslim brothers, that a *sunnah râtibah* (a regularly-observed supererogatory) prayer ought to be performed and it is detestable to abandon it. Whoever keeps leaving the *sunnah râtibah* commits a sin and, according to some Imâms, nullifies his uprightness because his leaving such worship implies carelessness and weakness in his faith

There are ten *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) (or twelve according to some scholars) considered as *sunnah râtibah* prayers:

- Two *rak`ahs* before the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer (or four *rak`ahs* according to some scholars)
- Two *rak`ahs* after the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer

- Two *rak`ahs* after the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer
- Two *rak`ahs* after the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer
- Two *rak`ahs* before the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer

The proof of these aforementioned *sunnah râtibah* (regularly-observed supererogatory) prayers is the *hadîth* reported on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"I remember ten (supererogatory) rak`ahs from Allah's Messenger (PBUH). (He used to perform) two rak`ahs before the Zuhr (Noon) Prayer and two rak`ahs after it, two rak`ahs after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer in his house, and two rak`ahs after the `Ishâ' (Night) Prayer in his house, and two rak`ahs before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and at that time nobody would enter the house of the Prophet (PBUH). Hafsah (the wife of the Prophet) told me that when the prayer caller (muezzin) pronounced the prayer call (adhân) and the dawn began to break, the (the Prophet) used to perform two rak`ahs."[1]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

In *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

"Before the Zuhr (Noon) Prayer, the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform four rak`ahs in my house; then he would go out and lead the people in prayer; then come in and perform two rak`ahs."[2]

This *hadîth* implies that it is more desirable to perform the *sunnah râtibah* prayer at home than to perform it in the mosque, for the sake of some benefits, such as:

- Keeping away from ostentation and self-conceit and screening acts of worship from the eyes of people
- Perfection of submissiveness and sincerity (to Allah)
- Maintaining the house, where prayer is performed, through remembrance of Allah and prayer which causes mercy to descend upon the people living therein, and keeps Satan away. The Prophet (PBUH) says:

  "Perform some of your (supererogatory) prayers at home, and do not take your houses as graves."[3]

The most stressed of the aforementioned *sunnah râtibah* (regularly-observed supererogatory) prayers are the two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) before the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer, for `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) says:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) was never more regular and particular in performing any supererogatory prayer than the two (supererogatory) rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer."*[4]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

> *"The two (supererogatory) rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer are better than the world and (all) that it contains."*[5]

So, the Prophet (PBUH) used to keep these two *rak`ahs* before the *Fajr* Prayer as well as the *Witr* Prayer both in residence and on journeys[6].

On journeys, it is not narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) performed any regularly-observed supererogatory prayers (*sunnah râtibah*) other than the two *rak`ahs* before the *Fajr* Prayer and the *Witr* Prayer. When **Ibn `Umar** (may Allah be pleased with them) was asked about the supererogatory prayer of the *Zuhr* Prayer, he said:

> *"Were I to perform supererogatory prayer, I would have completed the obligatory prayer (for during journey, one is not asked to perform supererogatory prayer and he is to shorten obligatory prayer)."*[7]

Besides, **Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him) stated:

> *"On journeys, it is a practice of the guiding Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) that he used to perform obligatory prayers only. It is not narrated about him (PBUH) that he performed, on his journeys, any regularly-observed supererogatory prayers other than the two rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer and the Witr Prayer."*[8]

It is an act of the *Sunnah* to make the two *rak`ahs* before the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer light, as `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to make the two rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer very light."*[9]

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to recite the Sura of *Al-Kâfirûn* (*the Disbelievers*)[10] after the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)* in the first *rak`ah*, and the Sura of *Al-Ikhlâs* (*Sincerity of Faith*)[11] in the second. The Prophet (PBUH) also used to recite the verse, ***"Say, [O believers], 'We have***

***believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us ...'*"** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 136) in the first *rak`ah* and the verse, **"*Say, 'O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you ...'*"** (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 64) in the second *rak`ah*.

Concerning the two supererogatory *rak`ahs* after the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer, it is also an act of the *Sunnah* to recite the Sura of *Al-Kâfirûn* after *Al-Fâtihah* in the first *rak`ah*, and the Sura of *Al-Ikhlâs* in the second. Al-Bayhaqî, At-Tirmidhî and other compilers of *Hadîth* related that Ibn Mas`ûd said:

> *"I cannot count (the number of times) I heard Allah's Messenger (PBUH) reciting the Sura of Al-Kâfirûn and the Sura of Al-Ikhlâs in the two (supererogatory) rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer and the two (supererogatory) rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer."*[12]

If you miss any of the aforementioned supererogatory prayers (of *sunnah râtibah*), it is an act of the *Sunnah* to make up for it. This also is to be done with regard to the *Witr* Prayer, for it is an act of the *Sunnah* to make up for it during the day, as the Prophet (PBUH) made up for the two supererogatory *rak`ahs* before the *Fajr* Prayer along with the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer when he slept and could not get up to perform them[13]. Also, it is narrated that when the Prophet (PBUH) was (so) busy that he missed the two supererogatory *rak`ahs* before the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer, he made up for them after the *`Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer[14]. So, a Muslim can make up for the rest of supererogatory prayers by means of analogical deduction, when missing any of them. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone oversleeps and misses the Witr or forgets it, he may perform it when he wakes up or when he remembers."*[15]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and At-Tirmidhî)

The *Witr* Prayer along with its preceding *Shaf`* are to be made up for, when missed, as stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, on the authority of `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said:

> *"When sleep or pain overpowered the Prophet (PBUH) and he could not perform the night vigil supererogatory prayer, he used to perform twelve rak`ahs (units of prayer) during the day."*[16]

So, a Muslim ought to keep the aforementioned *sunnah râtibah* (regularly-observed supererogatory) prayers to follow the excellent pattern of the Prophet (PBUH) as Allah says:

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the last day and [who] remembers Allah often."

(Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 21)

Keeping these supererogatory prayers compensates for any fault committed in the obligatory Prayers, as man is fallible and needs to compensate for his faults. Hence, a Muslim should not neglect this *sunnah râtibah* as it will result in more rewards prepared by the Lord (to be given to the Muslim on the Day of Resurrection). Likewise, along with every obligatory act of worship, Allah has ordained a supererogatory act of the same type to compensate for any faults committed in the obligatory act of worship, i.e. Prayer, Fasting, *Zakâh* and *Hajj* have supererogatory acts of worship. No doubt, these (above-mentioned) ordinances are favors of Allah upon His servants. Allah has varied His ordained acts of worship in order to raise in degrees His servants and remove from them their misdeeds. We invoke Allah to grant us success in all that pleases Him. Verily, He is Hearing and Responsive to supplications.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (1180) [3/75] and Muslim (1695) [3/252].
2 Muslim (1696) [3/253] and Al-Bukhârî (1182) [3/76].
3 Al-Bukhârî (432) [1/684] and Muslim (1817) [3/308].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1169) [3/59] and Muslim (1683) [3/248].
5 Muslim (1685) [3/248].
6 This was mentioned by Ibnul-Qayyim in his book "*Zâdul-Ma`âd* (*Provisions for the Hereafter*)" and this *hadîth* was related by Al-Bukhârî (1159).
7 Abû Dâwûd (1223) [2/15].
8 See: "*Zâdul-Ma`âd* (*Provisions for the Hereafter*)".
9 Al-Bukhârî (1171) [3/60] and Muslim (1681) [3/247].
10 Chapter No. 109 of the Qur'ân.
11 Chapter No. 112 of the Qur'ân.
12 At-Tirmidhî (431) [2/296], Al-Bayhaqî (4878) [3/62] and Muslim (1687) [3/249].
13 Muslim (1559) [3/189].
14 Al-Bukhârî (1233) [3/136] and Muslim (1930) [3/358].
15 Abû Dâwûd (1431) [2/93], At-Tirmidhî (464) [1/330] and Ibn Mâjah (1188) [1/53].
16 Muslim (1736) [3/268].

Duhâ (Forenoon) Prayer

You should know, my Muslim brothers, that there are many *hadîths* pertaining to the *Duhâ* (Forenoon) Prayer. In the Two *Sahîh*s, Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"My friend (i.e. the Prophet) advised me to do three things and I shall not leave them until I die (and they are) to fast three days every month, to perform the Duhâ Prayer, and to perform the Witr before sleeping."*[1]

Also, Abû Sa`îd (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to perform the Duhâ Prayer (so regularly) that we said, 'He will never give it up,' and sometimes he completely gave it up until we said, 'He will never perform it again.' "*[2]

The *Duhâ* Prayer can be as short as only two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) as the Prophet (PBUH) says, "*...the two rak`ahs of the Duhâ Prayer...*" in the aforementioned *hadîth* on the authority of Abû Hurayrah. Besides, Abû Dâwûd

related on the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone sits in his place of prayer after finishing the Subh (Morning) Prayer until he performs the two rak`ahs of the Duhâ Prayer, saying nothing but what is good, his sins will be forgiven even if they are more than the foam of the sea."*[3]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)

The *Duhâ* Prayer can be as long as eight *rak`ahs*, for Umm Hâni' (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

> *"On the day of the Conquest of Mecca, the Prophet (PBUH) performed eight rak`ahs as the Duhâ Prayer."*[4]
>
> (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth*)

Imâm Muslim also related on the authority of `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to perform the Duhâ Prayer with four rak`ahs and sometimes he used to perform as more rak`ahs as Allah willed."*[5]

The time for the *Duhâ* Prayer begins when the sun is about a spear's length above the horizon and it continues until the sun approaches the meridian. It is desirable to delay it until the sun has risen high and become hot. Imâm Muslim relates that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The prayer of those who are penitent is to be performed when the young (weaned) camel feels the heat of the sun."*[6]

That is, when it becomes so hot that the young (weaned) camels kneel down because of the heat of the sun.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (1178) [3/73] and Muslim (1669) [3/241].
2 Ahmad (476) [2/342] and At-Tirmidhî (1172) [3/21].
3 Abû Dâwûd (1287) [2/43].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1103) [2/746]; Muslim (763) [2/252]; Abû Dâwûd (1290) [2/44]; An-Nasâ'î (225) [1/137] and Ibn Mâjah (614) [1/340].
5 Muslim (1660) [3/236].
6 Muslim (1743) [3/271].

Prostration of Recitation

The prostration of recitation is one of the Prophetic practices and it is thus called as it relates to the recitation of the Qur'ân. It is an act of worship that is ordained by Allah and His Messenger to be done when reciting the verses of the Qur'ân or listening to them, as a means of drawing near to Allah, subjecting oneself to His Majesty and showing submissiveness to Him.

This act of prostration is enacted as an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) for both the one who recites and the one who listens to the Qur'ân. Scholars unanimously agree on its legality. Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"When the Prophet (PBUH) recited a sura of the Qur'ân that contains the prostration, he would prostrate and we would do the same and some of us (because of the heavy rush) could not find a place for prostration."*[1]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim,[2] the great scholar (may Allah have mercy on him), said, *"Positions of prostrations are what is reported to us and what is commanded for us to do."* That is, Allah tells us about the prostration of His creatures generally or at specific situations. So it is enacted, for the one who recites the Qur'ân and the one who listens to it, to act like them (Allah's creatures) when reciting or listening to the verses of prostration, and with greater reason the verses that actually command prostrating.

Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated, as a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*, that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When the son of Âdam (Adam) recites a verse of prostration and then falls down in prostration, Satan goes into seclusion weeping and saying, 'Woe unto me!' The son of Âdam is commanded to prostrate and he has prostrated, so Paradise is entitled to him, and I was commanded to prostrate, but I refused, so I am doomed to Hell.'* "[3]
>
> (Related by Muslim and Ibn Mâjah)

The prostration of recitation should be performed by both the one reciting and the one listening (to the Qur'ân). What is stated in the previously mentioned *hadîth* of Ibn `Umar, namely *"When the Prophet (PBUH) recited a sura of the Qur'ân that contains the prostration, he would prostrate and we would do the same,"* proves the legality of the prostration of the one who is listening. As for the hearer (i.e. the one who is not attentively listening), it is not obligatory upon him to perform the prostration of recitation. Al-Bukhârî related:

> *"`Uthmân (may Allah be pleased with him) passed by a reciter who recited a verse involving prostration to make `Uthmân perform prostration along with him, but `Uthmân did not perform prostration and said, 'The prostration should be performed by him who listens to it.'* "[4]

This act was reported about other Companions.

The suras of the Qur'ân that involve verses of prostration are *Al-A`râf*[5] *(the Elevations), Ar-Ra`d (the Thunder),*[6] *An-Nahl (the Bees),*[7] *Al-Isrâ' (the Night Journey),*[8] *Maryam (Mary),*[9] *Al-Hajj (the Pilgrimage),*[10] *Al-Furqân (the Criterion),*[11] *An-Naml (the Ants),*[12] *As-Sajdah (the Prostration),*[13] *Fussilat (Detailed),*[14] *An-Najm (the Star),*[15]

Al-Inshiqâq (the Split),[16] and *Al-`Alaq (the Clinging Substance)*[17]. Concerning the prostration in the Sura of *S̲âd*,[18] there is disagreement between scholars, whether it is a prostration of thankfulness or recitation; and Allah knows best.

On performing the prostration of recitation, one should pronounce *takbîr* (saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" i.e. "Allah is the Greatest"). This act is stated according to the *h̲adîth* of Ibn `Umar in which he said:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) used to recite the Qur'ân to us and whenever he recited a verse that contains a prostration, he used to say takbîr and prostrate, and we also used to prostrate along with him."*[19]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)

One should say in prostration, *"Subh̲âna Rabbiyal-A`lâ" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High),* the same as one says when prostrating during performing prayer. If one says, *"My face has prostrated before Allah, Who created and fashioned it, created in it hearing and vision by His Power and Might. O Allah! Reward me for it (the act of prostration), remove sins from me by it, reserve it for me, and accept it from me as You did from Your servant Dâwûd (David),"* it will be acceptable. To perform the prostration of recitation from the position of standing is better than performing it while sitting.

O Muslim, you should know that there are many ways of doing good acts, so make your best to follow them, and be loyal and faithful in both actions and words, that Allah may record you among the happy people.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (1075) [2/718] and Muslim (1295) [3/75].

2 See: *'Madârij As-Sâlikîn'* [1/106].

3 Muslim (240) [1/257] and Ibn Mâjah (1052) [1/549].

4 Al-Bukhârî (2/719) and `Abdur-Razzâq in his book *'Al-Mus̲anaf'*. `Abdur-Razzâq related the same action about other companions such as `Umar, his son, Ibn Mas`ûd and Ibn `Abbâs. See; *'Al-Mus̲anaf'* (3/344) and *'Sunan Al-Bayhaqî'* (2/458).

5 Chapter No. 7 of the Qur'ân.

6 Chapter No. 13 of the Qur'ân.

7 Chapter No. 16 of the Qur'ân.

8 Chapter No. 17 of the Qur'ân.
9 Chapter No. 19 of the Qur'ân.
10 Chapter No. 22 of the Qur'ân.
11 Chapter No. 25 of the Qur'ân.
12 Chapter No. 27 of the Qur'ân.
13 Chapter No. 32 of the Qur'ân.
14 Chapter No. 41 of the Qur'ân.
15 Chapter No. 53 of the Qur'ân.
16 Chapter No. 84 of the Qur'ân.
17 Chapter No. 96 of the Qur'ân.
18 Chapter No. 38 of the Qur'ân.
19 Abû Dâwûd (1413) [2/85].

Non-Regular Supererogatory Prayer

The Compilers of the *Sunan* related that the Prophet (PBUH) was asked which prayer was most excellent (concerning reward) after the prescribed ones. He (PBUH) said:

> *"Performing prayer in the middle of the night."*[1]

He (PBUH) also said:

> *"There is an hour in the night during which no Muslim person asks Allah for good in this world and the Hereafter but Allah will grant it to him; and that applies to every night."*[2]

Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Adhere to (the performance of) the night vigil supererogatory prayer, for it is the habit of the righteous people before you. Verily, the night vigil supererogatory prayer is a means of nearness*

to Allah and the way by which sins are removed and one stops committing sins."[3]

(Related by Al-Hâkim)

Allah, Exalted be He, praises those who stand for the night vigil supererogatory prayer, as He says:

> ***"...Indeed, they were before that doers of good. They used to sleep but little of the night, and in the hours before dawn they would ask forgiveness..."*** (Qur'ân: Adh-Dhâriyât: 16-18)

Praising such righteous servants, Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"Their sides part [i.e. they arise] from [their] beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend. And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for (the) eyes [i.e. satisfaction] as reward for what they used to do."*** (Qur'ân: As-Sajdah: 16-17)

So many are the religious texts that refer to the virtue of the night vigil supererogatory prayer. The night vigil supererogatory prayer is the most excellent act of worship among voluntary prayers. This is because the night vigil supererogatory prayer is characterized by more secrecy and is closer to sincerity. Moreover, it is to be performed while people are sleeping. In addition, it involves the preference of obedience to sleep or taking rest.

It is desirable to perform supererogatory prayers at all times, excluding the forbidden times. The night vigil supererogatory prayer is more preferable than that performed at the daytime, as mentioned before. The most preferable, concerning the night vigil supererogatory prayer, is that it is performed at the third of the night, which is directly after the middle of the night until the last sixth of the night. This is stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* as a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*, in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"The most beloved prayer to Allah is that of Dâwûd (David). He used to sleep for (the first) half of the night, perform prayer during the third of it, and (again) sleep for the sixth of it."[4]

Dâwûd used to sleep for the first half of the night to have rest and then get up at the time when Allah calls saying, *"Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him what he asks for?"*[5] Then Dâwûd would sleep for the sixth part of the night to have rest to be fully active by the *Fajr*

(Dawn) Prayer. So this is the best time for one to perform the night vigil supererogatory prayer. However, the whole night is a time for performing the night vigil supererogatory prayer. **Imâm A<u>h</u>mad** (may Allah have mercy on him) said, *"One may perform the night vigil supererogatory prayer from the time of sunset to the break of dawn."* Accordingly, the supererogatory act (of prayer) performed between the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer and the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer is considered among the night vigil supererogatory prayer, but it is better to delay performing the night vigil supererogatory prayer to the last part of the night as mentioned before. Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"Indeed, the hours of the night are more effective for concurrence [of heart and tongue] and more suitable for words."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Muzzammil: 6) Here, the phrase "hours of the night" refers to performing the night vigil supererogatory prayer after sleeping.

A Muslim person should intend to perform the night vigil supererogatory prayer and he should (set some time to) get a share of (the reward for) performing the prayer at night, which he should keep to, even though it is a little. So when a Muslim gets up (to perform the night vigil supererogatory prayer), he should use the *siwâk* (tooth-stick) and mention Allah saying:

> *"There is no deity but Allah Alone Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent. All praise be to Allah, all glory be to Him and there is no deity but Allah. Allah is the Greatest and there is no power or might except with Allah."*

He should also say:

> *"All praise be to Allah, Who gave me life after causing me to die (sleep) and to Him is the Resurrection. (All) praise be to Allah, Who restituted my soul back unto me and made my body sound and permitted me to mention Him."*

It is more desirable for the Muslim to begin his optional night prayer with two light (short) *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) for it is narrated by Abû Hurayrah that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *"When any of you stands up at night to perform the night vigil supererogatory prayer, let him begin his prayer with two short rak`ahs."*[6]
>
> (Related by Muslim and other compilers of *<u>H</u>adîth*)

Moreover, one performing the night vigil supererogatory prayer should pronounce *taslîm* (i.e. final salutations in prayer) at the end of every two *rak`ahs*, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The night vigil supererogatory prayer should be performed two rak`ahs after two."*[7]
>
> (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth*)

Thus, the night vigil supererogatory prayer is to be performed in two *rak`ahs* by reciting *Tashahhud* and pronouncing *taslîm* at the end, as it is a two-*rak`ah* prayer.

Furthermore, a Muslim should prolong the night vigil supererogatory prayer when standing, bowing and prostrating. In addition, the night vigil prayer should be performed at one's home. Scholars unanimously agree that supererogatory prayers are better to be performed at home, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform them at home. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"... Perform (supererogatory) prayer at your homes, for the best prayer of a person is the one which he performs at home, except the compulsory (congregational) prayer."*[8]

This is because performing it at home implies true devotion.

To perform the supererogatory prayer while standing is better than performing it while sitting with no excuse. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever performs prayer sitting gets half the reward of that who performs prayer while standing."*[9]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

However, he who performs the supererogatory prayer while sitting, but with an excuse, will get reward similar to that of the one who performs it while standing. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When the servant (of Allah) falls ill or travels, then he will get reward similar to that he gets for good deeds practiced in residence when in good health."*[10]

There is a unanimous agreement on the permissibility of performing supererogatory prayers in the sitting position though being able to perform it standing.

The one performing night vigil supererogatory prayer should end it with *Witr* as the Prophet (PBUH) used to end his prayer at night by performing *Witr*

prayer[11]. Moreover, he commanded, in several *hadîths*, that it (*Witr*) should be performed[12]. It is desirable for the one who misses the optional night prayer to perform it before noon. This came in the *hadîth* stating:

> *"Whoever is overpowered by sleeping and misses the (regular) portion (of prayer or recitation) and he performs it in the period between the Fajr Prayer and the Zuhr Prayer, it will be recorded for him as reciting it during night."*[13]

O Muslim brother, do not deprive yourself of (the reward for) the night vigil supererogatory prayer. You should get a share of it, even though it is a little, for yourself that you may keep in order to get the reward of those who stand (for night vigil prayer) and seek forgiveness (from Allah) before dawn. That which is little may lead you to have much (reward) and do much acts of obedience, for Allah does not allow the reward of the doers of good to be lost.

Endnotes

1 Muslim (2748) [4/296].
2 Muslim (1767) [3/278].
3 Al-Hâkim (1157) [1/308].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1131) [3/22] and Muslim (2731) [4/287].
5 Al-Bukhârî (1145) [3/38] and Muslim (1771) [3/280].
6 Muslim (1804) [3/296], Ahmad (9155) [2/525] and Abû Dâwûd (1323) [2/55].
7 Al-Bukhârî (990) [2/615], Muslim (1745) [3/272], Ahmad (4849) [2/41], Abû Dâwûd (1326) [2/55], At-Tirmidhî (437) [2/300], An-Nasâ'î (1693) [2/259] and Ibn Mâjah (1319) [2/118].
8 Al-Bukhârî (6113) [10/635] and Muslim (1822) [3/310].
9 Al-Bukhârî (1116) [2/756] and Muslim (1712) [3/257].
10 Al-Bukhâri (2996) [6/165].
11 As it was related in Muslim (1726) [3/265].
12 As it was related in Al-Bukhârî (998) [2/628] and Muslim (1752) [3/274].
13 Muslim (1742) [3/271].

Times When Prayer Is Forbidden

We have introduced above some of the rulings on the supererogatory prayers and now we are going to point out that there are certain times at which prayer is forbidden as narrated to have been pointed out by the Prophet (PBUH). However, there are some exceptions concerning this judgment.

There are five times at which performing prayer is forbidden:

1- **The first time** starts from the second (the factual) time of dawn to sunrise. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"When the dawn breaks, no prayer is to be performed except the two rak`ahs (units of prayer) of the Fajr Prayer (i.e. the supererogatory rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer)."[1]

(Related by Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

Therefore, when the dawn breaks, one should not perform any supererogatory prayer except the two *rak`ah*s of the *Fajr* Prayer.

2- **The second time** starts from the time of sunrise until the sun reaches the height of a spear, in one's sight, above the horizon.

3- **The third time** starts from the time when the sun is at its height at midday until it passes over the meridian. This time is known as the time when 'shade stops' i.e. it does not increase nor does it decrease; until it starts moving toward the west. `Uqbah Ibn `Âmir narrated,

"There are three times at which Allah's Messenger (PBUH) forbade us to perform prayer, or bury our dead (and they are) (i) when the sun begins to rise until it is fully up; (ii) when the sun is at its height at midday until it passes over the meridian; (iii) and when the sun draws near to setting until it sets."[2]

(Related by Imâm Muslim)

4- **The fourth time** starts from the time of the *`Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer until the sun sets, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"No prayer should be performed after the Fajr Prayer until the sun rises, and no prayer should be performed after the `Asr Prayer until the sun sets."[3]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

5- **The fifth time** starts from the time when the sun starts setting until it sets.

The Muslim person should know that it is permissible for one to make up for missed prayers at such (forbidden) times. This is based on the Prophet's *hadîth*:

"If anyone misses a prayer out of oversleeping or forgetfulness, he must perform it once he remembers"[4].

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

It is also permissible for one to perform the two *rak`ahs* of *tawâf* (circumambulating the Ka`bah) at such times, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Do not prevent anyone from circumambulating this House (i.e. the Ka`bah) and from performing prayer any moment he desires by day or by night."[5]

(Related by At-Tirmidhî who deems it a *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth*)

So this is regarded as a permission from the Prophet (PBUH) to perform circumambulation at all times at which prayer is forbidden. This is because, circumambulation is permissible at all times, and so are its two *rak`ah*s.

According to the most acceptable opinion of scholars, it is permissible at these times to perform prayer that have special causes, such as Funeral Prayer, Mosque Greeting Prayer (which is performed on entering the mosque) and Eclipse Prayer. There are legal proofs supporting this permissibility which are considered specific exceptions to the general rule of forbidding performing prayer at such times. Thus, forbidding performing prayer at such times means that it is forbidden to perform prayer with no special reason. Accordingly, it is not permissible to perform a supererogatory prayer, which has no specific reason, at such times.

Furthermore, it is permissible to perform the two supererogatory *rak`ah*s (units of prayer) of the *Fajr* Prayer after performing the *Fajr* Prayer. It is also permissible to perform the two supererogatory *rak`ah*s of the *Zuhr* Prayer after performing the *`Asr* Prayer, especially when one combines both the *Zuhr* and *`Asr* Prayers. This is based on the fact that the Prophet (PBUH) made up for the two supererogatory *rak`ah*s of the *Zuhr* Prayer after the *`Asr* Prayer.

Endnotes

1 Ahmad (4695) [2/27]. There are *hadith*s related with the same meaning such as Abû Dâwûd (1278) [2/40] and At-Tirmidhî (419) [2/278].
2 Muslim (1926) [3/354].
3 Al-Bukhârî (586) [2/80] and Muslim (1920) [3/35].
4 Al-Bukhârî (597) [2/93] and Muslim (1566) [3/198].
5 Abû Dâwûd (1894) [2/308], At-Tirmidhî (868) [3/220], An-Nasâ'î (584) [1/308] and Ibn Mâjah (1254) [2/86].

Congregational Prayer

Congregational prayer at the mosque is considered one of the great rituals of Islam. All Muslim scholars unanimously agree that performing the Five (Obligatory) Prayers at the mosque is a confirmed act of obedience and among the best means of drawing near to Allah. Rather, it is the greatest and most apparent of the rituals of Islam.

Allah, Exalted be He, ordained that Muslims should gather at certain times. Among these times are times that take place during day and night (i.e. 24 hours), namely, the Five (Obligatory) Prayers for which Muslims gather every day and night five times in order to perform them. Moreover, there is a time in every week, namely, the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer, which is greater than the gathering for the Five (Obligatory) Prayers. Furthermore, there are two other times for gathering in the year, namely, the gatherings for the prayers of the Two Feasts (`*Îds*), which are greater than that of the *Jumu`ah* Prayer, as all Muslims of the town are to gather to perform them. In addition, there is a time of gathering that takes place once a year, namely, the gathering for staying at `Arafah, which is greater than the gathering for the prayers of the Two Feasts (`*Îds*) in view of the fact that it is ordained for all Muslims all over the world.

These great gatherings in Islam are ordained (by Allah) for the sake and benefit of Muslims. That is to let Muslims be more interconnected by means of kindness, benevolence and mutual consideration. Another reason is to let Muslims love and show tenderness toward each other. In addition, these gatherings are ordained to let Muslims know and be acquainted with the conditions of each other, so they would visit the sick, follow the bier, and help the needy. It is also to show the power and interconnection among Muslims so that they can embitter their enemies, the polytheists and hypocrites. Moreover, such gatherings are ordained to eliminate that which might take place among Muslims of hatred, severing of relationships and grudge caused by the devils from among mankind and the jinn. Hence, Muslims shall live in an atmosphere of affection and hearts will gather in righteousness and piety. That is why the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Do not differ (while standing in prayer (i.e. straighten your rows); otherwise your hearts will differ."*[1]

Among the virtues of the congregational prayer is that it teaches the ignorant, multiplies the reward and motivates toward doing righteous deeds. This happens when a Muslim person sees other Muslims practicing good deeds and as a result, he will follow them. This came in the *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The prayer in congregation is twenty seven times superior to the prayer performed by a person alone."*[2]

And in another narration as:

> *"...twenty five times..."*[3]

The congregational prayer is obligatory upon men whether one is in residence or on a journey and whether in a state of safety or fear, as an individual duty[4]. The proof of this came in the Ever-Glorious Book (the Qur'ân), the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) and the practices of Muslims through centuries. It is a thing that the Muslim nation used to practice one generation after another. And for this reason, mosques are maintained and *imâms* (leaders in prayer) and prayer callers (muezzins) are appointed for them. Moreover, there was a special call ordained for it, namely, "Come to prayer! Come to success!" Concerning the state of fear, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And when you [i.e. the commander of an army] are among them and lead them in prayer, let a group of them stand [in prayer]..." (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 102)

This noble verse indicates the obligation of the congregational prayer, as it is not permissible for Muslims to leave it even in a state of fear. If it were not obligatory, then fear would be the most worthy excuse (for abandoning it). In the state of fear, most of the obligatory practices of prayer are abandoned. So, if it were not confirmed as an obligatory act, these many practices of prayer would not be left out. In other words, many acts are excused and forgiven when performing prayer in the state of fear for the sake of establishing the congregational prayer.

Al-Bukhârî and Muslim related a *hadîth* on the authority of Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"The most difficult prayer for the hypocrites is the Fajr and the 'Ishâ' Prayers and if they knew the reward for these prayers (at their respective times), they would certainly present themselves (in the mosques) even if they had to crawl."

(The Prophet added):

"Certainly, I was about to order the prayer caller (muezzin) to pronounce the immediate prayer call (iqâmah) and order a man to lead the prayer and then take a fire flame to burn all those who had not left their houses so far for the prayer, along with their houses."[5]

The evidence, concerning the obligation of the congregational prayer, which is stated in the *hadîth*, is based on two aspects. First, the Prophet (PBUH) described those who did not attend it as hypocrites; however, the one who does not follow (any) *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) is not regarded as a hypocrite. Accordingly, this indicates that those who did not attend the congregational prayer had left an obligation. Second, the Prophet (PBUH) wished to punish those who abandoned it. That is, punishment is to be established on the one who leaves an obligation. However, the Prophet (PBUH) did not establish that punishment, as there were women and children, who were not obligated to perform congregational prayer, in these houses.

It is related in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that there came to the Prophet (PBUH) a blind man who said:

"O Messenger of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque." He, therefore, asked the permission of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to perform prayer in his house. He (the Prophet) granted him permission. Then when the man turned away, he called him and said, "Do you hear the call to prayer (i.e. the adhân)?" The man said, "Yes." He (the Prophet) said, "So, respond to it."[6]

The Prophet commanded the man, despite what he would face of hardships, to come to the mosque to attend the congregational prayer and to respond to the prayer call. This stresses the obligation of the congregational prayer.

For the believers at the early period of Islam, the obligation of the congregational prayer was a settled matter. Ibn Mas`ûd (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"I have seen the time when no one among us (i.e. the Companions) stayed away from prayer except a hypocrite, whose hypocrisy was well known. And it could happen that a man walk between two persons (i.e. with the help of two persons with one on each side) until he stands in the row (of prayer)."[7]

This indicates that there was a kind of resolution (i.e. unanimous agreement), concerning its obligation, among the Companions of the Messenger (PBUH). They derived their agreement from the acts and practices of the Prophet (PBUH). It is known that no one should be considered a hypocrite except the one who leaves something that is obligatory on every individual Muslim.

Imâm Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth* related, as *marfû` hadîth*:

"Sternness, all sternness, and disbelief and hypocrisy are in him who hears the caller to Allah (i.e. prayer caller) calling for prayer and calling for success but does not respond to him."[8]

In this regard, there is a *hadîth* that affirms this in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"The Hand of Allah is with the (Muslim) community, so whoever deviates from it deviates to Hellfire."[9]

Ibn `Abbâs was asked about a man who stands for the night vigil supererogatory prayer and fasts the day, but does not attend the congregational prayer. He said, *"He will be in Hellfire."*

We ask Allah to grant us safety and guidance toward the right path and enable us to follow it, for He is the Hearing, the Responsive.

What is the ruling on the one who does not observe the congregational prayer? And how many persons should be present in order to make it (i.e., the congregational prayer) acceptable?

There are two cases concerning the one who does not observe congregational prayer and performs prayer alone. As for the first case, it applies to the excused, whether because of an illness or fear, and who is not in the habit of leaving congregational prayer. Such a person is rewarded as similar to the one who performs prayer in congregation. This is stated in the *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When the servant (of Allah) falls ill or travels, then he will get reward similar to that he gets for good deeds practiced in residence when in good health."*[10]

Hence, whoever is strictly resolved to perform his prayer in congregation, but is prevented from doing so owing to a legal excuse, is to be regarded as the one who performs it in congregation, and that is due to his good intention. As for the second case, it applies to the one who does not observe congregational prayer and who has not a legal excuse. If such a person performs his prayer alone, his prayer is viewed valid according to the majority of scholars; however, he loses a great and abundant reward. That is because the prayer in congregation is twenty seven times superior to the prayer performed by the person alone. Moreover, the person, who does not observe the congregational prayer, loses the reward given according to the number of steps he walks to the mosque. Furthermore, such a person does not only waste great reward, but he also commits a great sin. That is, he leaves an obligation with no excuse and commits a legally reprehensible act for which he should be reproved and punished by those in authority in order to guide him back to the right way.

Every Muslim should know that the place in which prayer is to be performed is the mosque. That is to make the rituals of Islam manifest. The act of maintaining mosques was not ordained except for this particular reason. In addition, performing prayer in places other than mosques is regarded as suspension of their unique role. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"[Such niches are] in houses [i.e. mosques] which Allah has ordered

to be raised and that His Name be mentioned [i.e. praised] therein; exalting Him within them in the morning and the evenings. [Are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of Zakâh. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turn about."

(Qur'ân: An-Nûr: 36-37)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

"The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer..."

(Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 18)

These two verses refer to mosques and those who maintain them, as the latter are promised the excellent reward. Moreover, these verses involve disapproval of those who do not attend prayer in mosques. It is related that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"No (obligatory) prayer of the one who is a neighbor of a mosque is to be performed except in the mosque (i.e. one should not perform obligatory prayers but in the mosque)."[11]

A same *hadîth* was related by 'Alî (may Allah be pleased with him) with an addition:

"The neighbor of the mosque is the one who hears the caller to prayer."[12]

(Related by Al-Bayhaqî with an authentic chain of transmitters)

Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"He who looks deeply into the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) will realize that performing prayer in the mosque is an obligation on every individual Muslim, except for an excuse permitting him to leave the congregational prayer. In other words, abandoning the prayer in the mosque with no excuse is similar to the act of abandoning the congregational prayer with no excuse. All hadîths and traditions agree unanimously on this principle."

Allah threatened those who stop the role of mosques and prevent prayer to be performed therein as He, Exalted be He, says:

"And who are more unjust than those who prevent the Name of Allah from being mentioned [i.e. praised] in His mosques and

strive toward their destruction. It is not for them to enter them except in fear. For them in this world is disgrace, and they will have in the Hereafter a great punishment."

(Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 114)

Similarly, performing prayer outside mosques is regarded as a way of stopping their role or reducing the numbers of Muslims performing their prayer in them. Hence, such an act is regarded a way of undermining the importance of prayer in individuals' sights. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"[Such niches are] in houses [i.e. mosques] which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His Name be mentioned [i.e. praised] therein..." (Qur'ân: An-Nûr: 36)

The word "raised" means raising mosques both tangibly and morally; for all this is required. However, if necessity calls for performing the congregational prayer outside the mosque, there will be no harm in doing so. An example for that are the people who are working in a certain place and that if they perform prayer in that place of work, it will be more beneficial for the work and be a way of committing workers to attend and establish the prayer. Such an act will not cause harm to the mosque because there are people around it, who would perform prayer in it. So there will be no harm in performing prayer at the place of their work for the sake of these reasons.

The least number that should be present in order to perform a valid congregational prayer is two persons. That is, two persons are the least number that can form a congregation. Abû Mûsâ narrated, as a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*, that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"The congregational prayer is to be performed by two persons or what is more than that (number)."[13]

(Related by Ibn Mâjah)

In addition, there is a *hadîth* stating that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Who can do an act of charity to this man (by performing prayer with him to let him get the reward for congregational prayer)?" A man stood and performed the prayer with him. Thereupon, the Prophet (PBUH) said, "That is a congregation."[14]

(Related by Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said to Mâlik Ibnul-Huwayrith:

"Let the oldest of you lead the prayer."[15]

Furthermore, unanimous agreement was reported in conformity with such an opinion.

As for women, it is viewed permissible for them to attend the congregational prayer in mosques after taking the permission of their husbands. This is to be done on certain conditions; namely, women must not be perfumed nor should they show their adornment and they should perform prayer with a complete cover. Moreover, women are not to mingle with men and they must perform prayer while standing behind the rows of men. This permissibility comes from the fact that women used to attend congregational prayer in the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH)[16]. Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) for women to attend assemblies of knowledge and preaching while being separated from men. It is also viewed permissible for a woman to perform congregational prayer with other women, while being separated from men; whether their leader (in prayer) is a woman or a man. In support of this view, the Prophet (PBUH) ordered Umm Waraqah to have a prayer caller (muezzin) and to lead the people of her home in prayer. This *hadîth* is related by Ahmad and the Compilers of *Sunan*[17]; and this act was done by other women Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)[18]. Another reason refers to the generalization stated in the *hadîth* of the Prophet (PBUH) in which he says:

"The prayer in congregation is twenty seven times superior to the prayer performed by person alone."

It is preferable for the Muslim to perform prayer in the mosque, in which congregational prayer is not to be established except by his presence. That is, the Muslim will get the reward of maintaining the mosque. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day." (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 18)

The next in preference is to perform prayer in a mosque that has a large congregation, as it involves more reward. The prophet (PBUH) said:

"A man's prayer performed along with another is better (in reward) than his prayer when performed alone, and his prayer with two men is better than his prayer with one, and whatever (number) is more than this will be more pleasing to Allah, Exalted be He."[19]

(Related by Ahmad and Abû Dâwûd and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by Ibn Hibbân)

It indicates that the larger congregation is better, as mercy and tranquility descend upon the congregation. In addition to this, a large congregation involves comprehensive supplication as well as the hope for a response, especially if there are scholars and righteous people among the congregation. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Within it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 108)

This verse indicates that it is desirable to perform prayer with the righteous congregation, who keep their purity and perform ablution perfectly.

Then, it is more preferable to perform prayer at old mosques, as they are the first mosques where acts and practices of worship and obedience were performed, before the newly established ones. What is more preferable to that is performing prayer at distant mosques, rather than the near ones. That is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The people who get the best reward for the prayer are those who are farthest away (from the mosque) and then those who are next farthest and so on."*[20]

He (PBUH) also said:

> *"The prayer performed in congregation is twenty five times more superior (in reward) to the prayer offered alone in one's house or in a business center; for if the one of you performs ablution and does it perfectly, and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of performing prayer, then for each step which he takes toward the mosque, Allah lifts him up a degree in reward and crosses out (i.e. forgives) one sin until he enters the mosque."*[21]

Further, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"O Banû Salamah! Keep living in your houses, for your steps (to the mosque) are recorded"*[22][23].

Some scholars are of the view that to perform prayer in the nearer of two mosques is worthier, as the near mosque has a right of neighborhood, so the Muslim is more entitled to perform his prayer in it. In support of this view, it is reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No (obligatory) prayer of the one who is a neighbor of the mosque is to be performed except in the mosque (i.e. one should not perform obligatory prayers but in the mosque)."*

Skipping the near mosque in order to perform prayer in a distant one may cause a kind of perplexity among the people living near the mosque. This opinion may be the more acceptable one, as skipping the near mosque will be regarded as an excuse for deserting it, and this will cause a kind of embarrassment and mistrust with regard to the *imâm* (leader in prayer) of the near mosque.

Rulings on Congregational Prayer

It is seen as prohibited that the congregation be led (in prayer) by someone else other than the assigned *imâm* of the mosque (i.e. the one who leads people regularly in prayer in this mosque), unless there is an excuse or by his permission. It is stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No man should lead another in prayer in a place where he (the latter) has authority without his (the latter's) permission."*[24]

An-Nawawî commented on this hadîth saying:

> *"The owner of the house and the assembly, and the imâm are worthy than others. When doing the opposite, it will be a kind of wronging the assigned imâm of the mosque and causing Muslims to keep away from him. Moreover, such act could cause division among Muslims."*

Some scholars are of the view that if the congregation in the mosque is led by someone else other than its assigned *imâm* and without his permission or any legal excuse, the prayer of the congregation will not be valid (acceptable). This refers to the seriousness of this issue, so it should be dealt with seriously. Therefore, Muslims should consider the right of their *imâm* and not to encroach upon it. Likewise, the *imâm* of the mosque should respect and consider the rights of those led (in prayer) and not to cause embarrassment to them. Hence, all of them (the leader in prayer and the people led) should consider the others' right so that affection and intimacy may be realized. So when the *imâm* is late and it is the time for prayer, Muslims are to perform their prayer, as done by Abû Bakr As-Siddîq and `Abdur-Rahmân Ibn `Awf (may Allah be pleased with them both) when the Prophet (PBUH) went to establish peace among Banû `Amr Ibn `Awf and he was delayed. Thereupon, Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) led the prayer[25]. Likewise, `Abdur-Rahmân Ibn `Awf led the people in prayer when the Prophet (PBUH) was late in another incident and the Prophet (PBUH) performed the last *rak`ah* (unit of prayer) behind him[26]. When the Prophet (PBUH) finished prayer, he said, *"You have done well."*

Among the rulings concerning the congregational prayer is that it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) for the one who has already performed prayer and then the immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) is pronounced while he is in the mosque, to perform that prayer along with the congregation. Abû Dharr narrated a *hadîth* on the Prophet (PBUH) stating:

> *"Perform prayer at its prescribed time, but if the immediate prayer call is pronounced while you are in the mosque, then pray, and do not say 'I have performed prayer and so I shall not pray.' "*[27]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)

In this case, the prayer such a person performs in the congregation will be considered a supererogatory prayer. This is stated in the *hadîth* of the Prophet (PBUH) addressed to two men, in which he commanded them to perform prayer again and he said to them:

> *"...It will be considered a supererogatory prayer for you."*[28]

This is ordained lest people should think that the one who is not performing prayer in congregation is not among those who establish prayer.

There is also another ruling on the congregational prayer, namely if the immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) is established, it will not be permissible for anyone to start performing a supererogatory prayer; either the confirmed ones (supererogatory practices) or the Mosque Greeting Prayer (which is performed on entering the mosque). That is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When the prayer commences, then there is no (valid) prayer but the obligatory prayer (i.e. one should not perform a supererogatory prayer when the obligatory prayer starts)."*[29]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)

It is stated in another narration related by Imâm Ahmad as:

> *"...No prayer (is to be performed) but that which has begun."*[30]

Consequently, any supererogatory prayer, in which the opening *takbîr* (saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" i.e. "Allah is the Greatest") has just been pronounced, is not to be valid as long as the immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) for the obligatory prayer, that one aims to perform along with the *imâm*, has been pronounced just before.

Imâm An-Nawawî (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"The reason behind this is to let the Muslim be devoted to the*

obligatory prayer from its beginning. That is, to start it immediately after the imâm (leader in prayer). Moreover, to observe the perfection of the obligatory prayer is worthier than getting busy with a supererogatory prayer. Another reason is that the Prophet (PBUH) forbade disagreeing with imâms[31]*. Furthermore, the stated virtue of the opening takbîr (in prayer) is not to be gained except when said immediately after the imâm."*[32]

However, if the immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) is pronounced while the person is performing a supererogatory prayer, in which he has already pronounced the opening *takbîr*, he may complete it making it light and not to cut it short unless he is afraid of missing the congregational prayer. Allah, Exalted be He, said, ***"...And do not invalidate your deeds."*** (Qur'ân: Mu<u>h</u>ammad: 33) Accordingly, if one is afraid of missing the congregational prayer, one is to cut short the supererogatory prayer, as the obligatory act is more important.

Endnotes

1 Abû Dâwûd (664) [1/306], An-Nasâ'î (810) [1/425] and Ibn Mâjah (976) [1/518].

2 Al-Bukhârî (645) [2/171] and Muslim (1475) [3/154].

3 Al-Bukhârî (647) [2/171] and Muslim (1474) [3/154].

4 Individual duty: A religious duty whose obligation extends to every Muslim.

5 Al-Bukhârî (657) [2/184] and Muslim (1480) [3/156].

6 Muslim (1484) [3/157].

7 Muslim (1486) [3/158].

8 A<u>h</u>mad (15564) [3/439]. Al-Haythamî graded it as authentic *<u>h</u>adîth* in his book '*Majma' Az-Zawâ'id*' (*The Compilation of Additional <u>H</u>adîths*) [2/41-42] and Al-Mundhirî in his book '*At-Targhîb wat-Tarhîb*' [1/273]

9 At-Tirmidhî (2172) [4/466] and An-Nasâ'î (4032) [4/106].

10 Al-Bukhârî (2996).

11 Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1538) [1/399], Al-Bayhaqî (4945) [3/81] and Al-<u>H</u>âkim. A similar *<u>h</u>adîth* was related by Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1537) [1/399].

12 Al-Bayhaqî (4943) [3/81].

13 Ibn Mâjah (972) [1/517].

14 A<u>h</u>mad (11394) [3/57], Abû Dâwûd (574) [1/274] and At-Tirmidhî (220) [1/427].

15 Al-Bukhârî (630) [2/146] and Muslim (1533) [2/179].

16 Al-Bukhârî (867) [2/450] and Muslim (1457) [3/146].

17 A<u>h</u>mad (27273) [6/453] and Abû Dâwûd (592) [1/282].

18 This was reported about 'Â'ishah and Umm Salamah as it was related by Ibn Abû Shaybah in his book '*Al-Mu<u>s</u>annaf*' (4952, 4954) [1/430], Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1492, 1493) [1/388], 'Abdur-Razzâq (5086) [3/141] and Al-Bayhaqî (5355) [3/187].

19 A<u>h</u>mad (21258) [5/184], Abû Dâwûd (554) [1/267] and Ibn <u>H</u>ibbân in his book *A<u>s</u>-<u>S</u>a<u>h</u>î<u>h</u>* (2056) [5/405].

20 Al-Bukhârî (651) [2/178] and Muslim (1511) [3/170].
21 Al-Bukhârî (477) [1/730] and Muslim (1504) [3/168].
22 Banû Salamh wanted to move their houses near the mosque so the Prophet (PBUH) said this <u>h</u>adith.
23 Muslim (1518) [3/172].
24 Muslim (1530) [2/177].
25 Al-Bukhârî (684) [2/217] and Muslim (948) [2/365].
26 Muslim (951) [2/367].
27 Muslim (1467) [3/151].
28 Abû Dâwûd (575) [1/274], At-Tirmidhî (219) [1/424] and An-Nasâ'i (857) [1/447].
29 Muslim (1642) [3/228].
30 A<u>h</u>mad (8597) [2/464].
31 As the *<u>h</u>adiths* related in Al-Bukhârî (722) [2/270] and Muslim (929) [2/354].
32 See: '*Al-Majmû'*' [4/108] and '*Shar<u>h</u> <u>S</u>a<u>h</u>î<u>h</u> Muslim*' [3/228].

The Latecomer to Congregational Prayer

The sounder of the two views of scholars regarding the one coming late for congregational prayer is that he is not to be regarded as having caught up with the prayer unless he prays at least one *rak'ah* (unit of prayer) thereof. So, if one catches less than one *rak'ah* in congregation, one is not regarded as having attended the congregation, but one is allowed to follow the *imâm* from the time one has entered the prayer and one will get the reward for the congregational prayer according to one's intention. Likewise, if one intends to perform prayer in congregation but finds that the people have finished the prayer, then one will get a reward like that of those who have performed prayer in congregation, according to one's intention. This view agrees with the *hadîth*s stating that if somebody intends to do a good deed and he cannot do it, then it will be recorded for him as a reward like that of the one who does it[1].

According to the soundest view of scholars, the *rak'ah* is counted only when one catches up with the prayer during the bowing (position). This is

according to the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone catches up (the people in prayer when they are) bowing, he already has got the rak`ah"*
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)

This is also stated in a *hadîth* in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* narrated on the authority of Abû Bakr who reached the Prophet (PBUH) in the mosque while he (the Prophet) was bowing in prayer and he too bowed before joining the row. The Prophet (PBUH) did not order him to perform the *rak`ah* again[2] which proves that it is sufficient for one if one catches up with the prayer when the congregants are bowing.

If a latecomer to congregational prayer reaches the prayer while the *imâm* is in the bowing position, he must pronounce the opening *takbîr* (in prayer) while standing, then he should bow with the *imâm* preferably after a second *takbîr* (saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" i.e. "Allah is the Greatest"). If the latecomer pronounces the opening *takbîr*, it will take the place of the *takbîr* for bowing. This is because the opening *takbîr* must be pronounced while standing erect, while it is better to pronounce the *takbîr* for bowing after pronouncing the opening *takbîr*.

If the latecomer to congregational prayer gets the *imâm* in any position (in prayer), he should follow him. This is stated in the *hadîth* narrated by Abû Hurayrah and others in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If you come to prayer while we are prostrating, prostrate yourselves along with us, but do not consider it a rak`ah (unit of prayer)."*[3]

When the *imâm* pronounces the second *taslîm* (the final *Salâms* in prayer), the latecomer is to stand erect to perform whatever he has missed, yet he is not to stand before the second *taslîm* pronounced by the *imâm*.

According to the soundest view of scholars, the beginning of the prayer of the latecomer to the congregational prayer is the part he catches up with the *imâm*, and what he performs after the *taslîm* (of the *imâm*) is the last part of it. This view is according to the *hadîth* related by the majority of the compilers, in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"...And complete whatever you have missed."*[4]

It is known that completing a thing never happens unless it has already begun. The other narration of the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said, *"...And make up for whatever you have missed"*[5] does not contradict the

narration stating "...*And complete whatever you have missed.*" This is because making up for (whatever one misses in prayer) means performing it, according to the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And when the prayer has been concluded..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Jumu`ah: 10)

And His statement:

> ***"And when you have completed your rites..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 200)

Thereupon, the Prophet's statement "...*And make up for whatever you have missed*" can be paraphrased as performing and completing (the prayer); and Allah knows best.

If the prayer is publicly-recited, the one led in prayer must listen to the recitation of the *imâm* and it is not permissible for him to recite during the recitation of the *imâm*, either the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah* or any other sura. This is because Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"So when the Qur'ân is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 204)

Imâm Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) said, *"Scholars unanimously agree that the recitation mentioned in this verse is that recited during prayer."* If recitation was obligatory on the part of the one led in prayer, he would not have been ordered (by the Lawgiver)[6] to abandon such an obligation to observe a supererogatory act, namely listening to the recitation of the *imâm*.

Besides, if the one led in prayer concerns himself with reciting, then the loud recitation of the *imâm* will be useless.

Since saying '*Âmîn* (Amen)' after the recitation of the *imâm* takes the place of the recitation, Allah, Exalted be He, said to Mûsâ (Moses) and Hârûn (Aaron):

> ***"...Your supplication has been answered..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Yûnus: 89)

This was said while Mûsâ was the one who invoked Allah saying:

> ***"...Our Lord, indeed You have given Pharaoh and his establishment splendor and wealth in the worldly life..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Yûnus: 88)

Hârûn, on his side, said '*Âmîn*' which takes the place of the invocation. So, Allah, Exalted be He, addresses both saying, ***"...Your supplication has been answered."*** (Qur'ân: Yûnus: 89) This proves that the one who says '*Âmîn*' after an invocation is like that who says the invocation.

On the other hand, if the prayer is secretly-recited or the one led in prayer does not hear the *imâm*, then he is to recite *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*. In this way, all the legal proofs (related to that) accord with each other, i.e. the one led in prayer must recite *Al-Fâtihah* in the secretly-recited prayer but he is not to recite it in the publicly-recited prayer; and Allah knows best.

One of the important rulings on the congregational prayer is that it is obligatory on the one led in prayer to follow the *imâm* completely and that it is prohibited for him to precede the *imâm*. This is because the one led in prayer must follow the *imâm*, and the follower is not to precede the one followed. In this regard, Al-Bukhârî and Muslim related that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Is he who raises his head before the imâm not afraid that Allah may transform his head into that of a donkey or his figure (face) into that of a donkey?"*[7]

So the one who precedes the *imâm* (in prayer) is like the donkey which does not understand the wisdom behind whatever it does. If one precedes the *imâm*, one then deserves to be punished. In a *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"The imâm is appointed to be followed; so do not bow until he bows and do not prostrate until he prostrates."*[8]

Imâm Ahmad and Abû Dâwûd relate that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The imâm is appointed to be followed; so when he bows, you should also bow, and do not bow until he bows. Also, when he prostrates, you should also prostrate and do not prostrate until he prostrates."*[9]

The Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) used not to bow their backs to prostrate until the Prophet (PBUH) prostrated, then they would do the same[10]. When `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) saw a man preceding the *imâm* in prayer, he beat him saying:

"You neither performed the prayer alone nor did you follow your imâm."

Some people do not give due attention to this matter; they precede the *imâm* (in prayer), thus they join those warned with the severe (Divine) punishment. Besides, this might cause the invalidity of their prayer. Imâm Muslim relates that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Do not precede me in bowing and prostration and ending of prayer."*[11]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah says:

> *"Scholars unanimously agree that it is prohibited to precede the imâm (in prayer). In addition, it is not permissible for the worshipper to bow before his imâm or to raise one's head (after bowing) before he raises his head, or to prostrate before he prostrates. There are many well-known hadîths in which the Prophet (PBUH) forbade doing such an act."*[12]

Preceding the *imâm* in prayer is a kind of deception done by Satan to the ones performing payer, so that they might perform it improperly. What would the person who precedes the *imâm* get?! He will not end his prayer until the *imâm* pronounces *taslim* (the final *Salâms* in prayer). Therefore, Muslims should pay attention to this and should adhere to the rulings on following the *imâm*.

We invoke Allah to make all of us comprehend our religion and to have insight into its rulings, for He is the Hearing and the Responsive. This is because if Allah wants to do good to somebody, He bestows on him the gift of understanding the religion (i.e. Islam).

Endnotes

1 There are a lot of *hadîths* concerning this topic as related by Abû Dâwûd (564) [1/571] and An-Nasâ'î (854) [1/446].
2 Al-Bukhârî (783) [2/783].
3 Abû Dâwûd (893) [1/387].
4 Al-Bukhârî (636) [1/153] and Muslim (1358) [2/100].
5 An-Nasâ'î (860) [1/449].
6 The Lawgiver of *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law) is Allah, Exalted be He; the term can also refer to the Prophet (PBUH) as he never ordained but what was revealed to him by Allah.

7 Al-Bukhârî (691) [2/236] and Muslim (962) [2/371].
8 Muslim (929) [2/354].
9 Ahmad (7144) [2/229], Abû Dâwûd (603) [1/286] in the same wording but Al-Bukhârî (688) and Muslim (412) related it in a different wording.
10 Al-Bukhârî (690) [2/234] and Muslim (1062) [2/413].
11 Muslim (960) [2/370].
12 See: *'Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ'* (23/336).

CHAPTER 21

Women's Attendance in Mosques

Our religion is a perfect one that comprehensively covers our welfare and interests in this world and in the Hereafter. Islam came with good to all Muslims, whether male or female as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nahl: 97)

Islam takes an interest in women, conferring honor and respect upon them as long as they abide by its rulings and adorn themselves with its virtues. One of the things by which Islam honors woman is allowing her to attend the mosques to witness the congregational prayers and the assemblies for remembering Allah in order to win reward. However, at the same time the woman must do this with due decency and precautions that keep her away from any satanic seduction and preserve her dignity as well.

It is detestable to prevent women from going to the mosque if they ask permission. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Do not prevent the female servants of Allah (women) from (going to) the mosques of Allah, but they should go while they are not perfumed."*[1]
>
> (Related by Ahmad and Abû Dâwûd)

This is because performing the prescribed prayers in congregation has a great reward for both men and women; moreover, walking to the mosque has a great reward.

It is authenticated in the Two *Sahihs*[2] and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If your women ask permission to go to the mosque at night, allow them."*[3]

The wisdom behind asking their husbands' permission is that it is among the rights of men upon their women (wives) to stay at home. Thus, going to the mosque, in this case, is only permissible, and they are not to abandon what is obligatory for the sake of what is permissible. When the husband gives permission to his wife to go to the mosque, he then gives up his right (upon his wife to stay at home).

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"...Yet their houses (women's) are better for them (to perform prayer therein)."*[4]

The Prophet (PBUH) means that it is better for women to perform prayer in their houses to avoid any satanic temptation. The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

> *"...But they should go while they are not perfumed."*

This means that women are allowed to go to the mosque (to perform prayer) on the condition that they should not be perfumed, lest they might tempt men with their perfume, thus diverting men's eyes to them. The intended meaning here is that perfume is something that tempts men towards women. Joined to perfume (in prohibition) is what resembles it (with regard to temptation) like wearing attractive clothes, jewels and adornments. Thereupon, if a woman perfumes herself or puts on attractive clothes, then she is prohibited to go to the mosque and must be forbidden from going out of her home. It is stated in

Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth) and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever woman perfumes herself should not join us in the `Ishâ' (Night) Prayer."*[5]

Besides, if a woman went out to the mosque (for prayer), she should keep away from crowded gatherings of men. **Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Those in authority must forbid mingling between men and women in marketplaces and gatherings of men. The responsibility for this is upon those in authority, since mingling between men and women brings about a great affliction. This is according to the hadîth in which the Prophet (PBUH) said, ['After me, I have not left any affliction more harmful to men than women."*[6]

Ibnul-Qayyim added:

> *"Thus, those in authority must forbid women from going out adorned and beautified (in a seducing way). They must also forbid those women who are dressed but appear to be naked, such as in transparent clothes. Those in authority must also forbid women from talking to men in streets and forbid men as well from doing the same."*[7]

When a woman adheres to the high moral standards of Islam, such as bashfulness, covering herself, keeping away from attractive adornment and perfume (when going out) and keeping away from mingling with men, it becomes permissible for her then to go to the mosque for prayer and attend gatherings for the remembrance of Allah. However, it is better for her to stay at home, because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"...Yet their houses are better for them (to perform prayer therein)."*

Moreover, scholars unanimously agree that it is better for women to perform prayer in their houses than in the mosque, to keep away from any satanic seduction, and for purposes of safety and for uprooting any source of evil.

If a woman does not adhere to the high moral standards of Islam and does not avoid whatever the Messenger (PBUH) forbids of adornment and perfume when going out, then it is prohibited for her to go to the mosque, and she must be prevented from going out by her guardian or those in authority. It is stated in the Two *Sahîhs* on the authority of `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said:

"Had Allah's Messenger (PBUH) witnessed what the women were doing, he would have forbidden them from going to the mosque as the women of the Children of Israel had been forbidden."[8]

When a woman goes to the mosque, both the benefit gained behind this (for her and for the whole community) and the avoiding of any cause of evil are to be taken into account (by the Lawgiver). If the cause of evil is greater than the benefit gained, a woman, in this case, must be prevented from going to the mosque.

If a woman is asked to observe these high moral standards when going out to the mosque, then it is more worthy for her to be cautious and to keep away from any cause of temptation when going anywhere other than the mosque. Nowadays, there are some people calling for the participation of the woman in jobs, as in the West and those imitating the morals of the West. Those people are in fact calling for the spread of seductions, leading the woman to her misery and are depriving her of her dignity. Those people should be stopped and there should be an end to the views of the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*) they spread through their tongues or pens. It is sufficient as a proof for us the women in the West and those who model on them. They have gone through a lot of calamities and they have painful lives from which their societies are suffering. Let them be an example for us, for the fortunate person is the one who takes a lesson from the fate of others.

The only pretext those people offer for their view is that half of the society (women) would be idle (if prevented from work). They offer this pretext so that the woman could be on an equal foot with man in work, forgetting or pretending to forget that the woman is already doing a great job in her home. She is doing a great job for her society and only she could do it, since it is suitable for her nature and is in conformity with her natural disposition. She is the wife with whom the husband finds tranquility. She is the mother, the one who bears, breastfeeds, raises children and the one who performs domestic tasks. If she is to leave her home to share man his work, then who else will perform those tasks? Those tasks would not be performed at all, and the society would lose its other half; so what would the first half (i.e. men) do? Thereupon, the society's edifice would fall down and its pillars would collapse.

We advise those people to come to their senses, and not to be of those who have exchanged the favor of Allah for disbelief and settled their people in the home of ruin. We also advise them to be of those advocating constructive views not destructive ones.

O Muslim woman! Adhere to the teachings of your religion. Do not let yourself be deluded by the views advocated by the misleading people, who want to deprive you of the dignity granted to you by Islam, and nothing other than Islam can grant you this. Almighty Allah says:

> ***"And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers."*** (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 85)

May Allah grant all of us guidance to whatever is good and useful in this world and in the Hereafter!

Endnotes

1 Ahmad (9625) [2/577] and Abû Dâwûd (565) [1/271].
2 The Two *Sahîhs*: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
3 Al-Bukhârî (865) [2/448] and Muslim (990) [2/383].
4 Ahmad (5470) [2/103] and Abû Dâwûd (567) [1/271].
5 Muslim (997) [2/383].
6 Al-Bukhârî (5096) [9/172] and Muslim (6880) [9/57].
7 See: *'At-Turuqul-Hakîmah'* [p.325]
8 Al-Bukhârî (869) [2/451] and Muslim (998) [2/385].

Imamate (in Prayer)

Imamate (in prayer) is an important religious position undertaken by the Messenger (PBUH) himself and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after him. Many *hadîths* mention the favor of the imamate, such as the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Three persons will be on the hillock of musk on the Day of Resurrection: (i) the person who leads the people in prayer and they are well-pleased with him..."*[1]

In another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The reward of him (the imâm in prayer) is like that of those who perform prayer behind him."*

That is why one of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) said to the Prophet (PBUH) *"Appoint me to lead my people in prayer."*[2] They have been aware of the reward and merit of the imamate.

Yet, unfortunately, we witness nowadays many of knowledge-seeking students turning away and abstaining from the imamate, giving it up because

of nothing but laziness and the weak wish of obtaining goodness. However, it is Satan only who denies them the will to undertake imamate. Knowledge-seeking students instead, should undertake imamate earnestly and vigorously and should seek the reward of this deed only from Allah. This is because they are more entitled to undertake it and undertake other good tasks. The more one enjoys the qualifications of the imamate, the more it becomes worthy of him to undertake it than any other person who is inferior to him with regard to these qualifications. Rather, the qualified person ought to undertake it if there is no other person but him worthy of it.

The most worthy to lead people in prayer is the one who is most versed in the Book of Allah (i.e. the Qur'ân). The *imâm* should be aware of the places of articulation of letters, make no grammatical mistakes and apply the rules of recitation (of the Qur'ân) without artificiality or stagy eloquence. Besides, the *imâm* should have Islamic juristic knowledge of prayer; its requirements, integral parts, obligations and what nullifies it in consideration of the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The one who is most versed in the Book of Allah (the Qur'ân) should lead people in prayer."*[3]

There are also many other authentic *hadîth*s reporting that the most worthy person of leading people in prayer is the most versed in the Glorious Qur'ân, and who, at the same time, has juristic knowledge of prayer. This is because the most versed one at the time of the Prophet (PBUH) used to be the one having the greatest religious knowledge.

If people are equally versed in their knowledge of the Qur'ân, the one with the greatest religious knowledge should lead the people, since he combines two merits: the good recitation (of the Qur'ân) and the Islamic juristic knowledge. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If people are equal in recitation (of the Qur'ân), then the one with the greatest knowledge in the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) should lead them in prayer."*

This *hadîth* points to the one having the greatest religious knowledge. This is because the need of those led in prayer for juristic knowledge (of prayer) is more than their need for the rules of recitation. That is because what is obligatory in prayer is limited as far as recitation is concerned, while there are many unlimited situations that may take place generally in prayer.

If people are equally versed in juristic knowledge and recitation, the earliest one in Hegira should lead people in prayer. Hegira here means moving from a place of polytheism to a Muslim one.

If people are equally versed in recitation, juristic knowledge and Hegira, the oldest one should lead the people in prayer, in consideration of a *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Let the oldest one amongst you lead the prayer."*[4]

This is because being old while being a Muslim is a merit; also because old age makes one closer to submissiveness in prayer and makes one's invocation more worthy of being accepted.

What proves this sequence of those who should lead people in prayer is the *hadîth* related by Muslim on the authority of Abû Mas'ûd Al-Badrî, in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"The one who is most versed in Allah's Book (the Qur'ân) should act as the imâm for the people, but if they are equally versed in reciting it, then the one who has most knowledge regarding the Sunnah (is to lead the prayer). If they are equal regarding the Sunnah, then the earliest one to immigrate (to Medina) (is to lead the prayer). If they are equal regarding immigration, then the oldest one (is to lead the prayer)."*

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) says:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) gives preference in leading people in prayer to those having the greatest knowledge of the Qur'ân and the Sunnah. If people are equal in this knowledge, preference should be given to those who outstrip the others in doing good deeds. The one who surpasses others in doing good deeds willingly (like the migrant) is given more preference over one who is distinguished in doing good deeds because of natural reasons decreed by Allah; namely old age."*[5]

Yet, there are some considerations that are to be put into account and are given preference over people attending prayer as far as imamate is concerned, even if those people are better. These considerations are:

Firstly, the assigned *imâm* (i.e. the one who leads people regularly in prayer): If he is qualified for imamate, it is not permissible to let another person lead the people in prayer, even if this person is better, except with the *imâm*'s permission.

Secondly, the householder: If he is qualified for imamate (in the prayer performed at his house), and it is not permissible to let another person be the *imâm* except with his permission.

Thirdly, the sultan (the ruler; the greatest person in authority) or his representative: It is impermissible to let another person lead people in prayer except with his permission; this is in case the ruler is qualified for leading people in prayer.

What proves the preference of these people over others is the *hadîth* related by Abû Dâwûd in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"No man should lead another in prayer where (the latter) is in his house, or when he has authority, without his permission."*[6]

There is also a *hadîth* in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"No man should lead another in prayer where (the latter) is in his house, or has authority, without his permission."*[7]

One's authority here means the place where one has the authority thereof or in one's estate.

Al-Khattâbî says:

> *"This hadîth means that the householder is worthier to lead the prayer in his house if he has the juristic knowledge and the knowledge of recitation (of the Qur'ân) that qualify him to establish prayer properly."*[8]

If the *imâm* of the mosque is appointed by the ruler or his representative, or the people (attending prayer) agree upon letting him be the *imâm*, then he is the worthiest person for leading the prayer, since this is considered a special authority. Moreover, if another person precedes him in leading people in prayer, people may think ill of that latter person or have an aversion towards him.

It is obvious from what has been demonstrated previously that the honor, the merit, and the position of imamate in Islam are high. This is because the *imâm* of prayer is an example to be followed. The imamate is an honorable degree, since it is a kind of distinction to do righteous deeds and it helps obeying Allah and adhering to the Muslim community. Through the imamate, the mosques of Allah are maintained with acts of obedience. The merit of imamate is also included in the general meaning stated in the verse, about the invocation of the servants of the Most Merciful, and in which Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us a leader [i.e. example] for the righteous.' " (Qur'ân: Al-Furqân: 74)

The imamate in prayer comes from the imamate in religious affairs, particularly in case the *imâm* preaches, advises, and reminds people in the mosque of Allah. He is thus among those inviting people to Allah, as well as those who say and do what is good and righteous. Allah says about those people:

"And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, 'Indeed, I am of the Muslims.' "

(Qur'ân: Fussilat: 33)

Thus, only the deprived persons (of the merits of imamate and its reward) are the ones who are averse to undertake it; and there is neither Might nor Power except with Allah.

Endnotes

1 Ahmad (4800) [2/36] and At-Tirmidhî (1991) [4/355].
2 Ahmad (16250) [4/29]; Abû Dâwûd (531) [1/259] and An-Nasâ'î (671) [1/351].
3 Al-Bukhârî related it as a commentary in the book of *'Adhân'* and Muslim (673).
4 Al-Bukhârî (628) [2/145] and Muslim (1533) [3/179].
5 See: *'Majmû 'ul-Fatâwâ'* (19/26).
6 Abû Dâwûd (582) [1/277].
7 Muslim (1532) [3/178].
8 See: *'Ma 'âlim As-Sunan'* in the footnote of *Sunan Abû Dâwûd* (1/278 -279).

Invalid Imamate

Imamate in prayer is a great responsibility that requires some qualifications in the *imâm* or at least it is desirable to enjoy them. In addition, the *imâm* should be free from some qualities preventing him from assuming this position, or reducing his efficiency to undertake it.

It is not permissible to let the defiantly disobedient person lead the prayer. The defiantly disobedient person is the one who transgresses the right way by committing one of the major sins, which are less in degree than polytheism. There are two kinds of defiant disobedience; defiant disobedience in deeds and in belief. The first kind is defiant disobedience in deeds, such as *zinâ* (adultery or fornication), stealing, drinking intoxicants or the like. The second kind is defiant disobedience in belief, such as adopting the doctrine of the Râfidah, the Mutazilites (Mu`tazilah)[1] or the Jahmiyyah[2].

It is not permissible to assign a defiantly disobedient person as the *imâm* in prayer. This is because what is told by this person is rejected according to the verse in which Allah says:

"O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate..." (Qur'ân: Al-Hujurât: 6)

So, he cannot be entrusted with fulfilling the requirements and rulings of prayer, and he is thus a bad example, and making him lead the prayer will result in evil. Moreover, The Prophet (PBUH) says:

"No woman should lead a man in prayer, nor should a Bedouin lead an immigrant (to Medina), nor should a wicked man lead a believer in prayer except when he overpowers him with his authority so he (the believer) is afraid of his sword and whip (i.e. he is afraid of his power)."[3]

(Related by Ibn Mâjah)

What proves our view here is the Prophet's statement:

"...Nor should a wicked man lead a believer in prayer."

Wickedness here means deviation from the right way.

It is forbidden to perform prayer behind a defiantly disobedient person. Besides, it is not permissible to make him the *imâm* in prayer when it is possible to do without him. It is prohibited for those in authority to assign a defiantly disobedient person as *imâm*, for they are commanded to observe the legal interests. So, it is not permissible for them to let the people perform prayer behind a defiantly disobedient person. In addition, scholars disagree as to the validity of performing prayer behind such a person. So, people should be guarded against performing prayer behind a defiantly disobedient person.

The imamate of the one unable to bow, prostrate or sit erect is invalid, except when leading a person similar to him in inability to do such acts in prayer. So is the case of the imamate of the one unable to perform prayer standing when there is a person who can perform it standing, except when the former is the assigned *imâm* and is afflicted with an illness whose recovery is expected to be soon. In this case, it is permissible for people to perform prayer behind him while sitting. This is according to what `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

"The Prophet (PBUH) performed prayer in his house while sitting when he was ill and the people performed prayer behind him standing, so he made a gesture to them to sit down. When he had finished the prayer, he said, 'The imâm is appointed so that he should be followed,

so bow down when he bows down, and rise up when he rises up and perform prayer sitting when he (the imâm) performs (it) sitting.' "[4]

Besides, in the *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim on the authority of Abû Hurayrah, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"...Then perform prayer sitting all together."[5]

Imâm Muslim also relates this *hadîth* with slightly different wording on the authority of Anas[6]. Then, people led in prayer are to sit when the *imâm* sits because the *imâm* should be the one leading the people in prayer.

If some people perform prayer standing and others perform it sitting behind an *imâm* who performs it sitting, their prayer will be valid according to the soundest view in this regard. In this case, if the *imâm* appoints a person to lead the people standing, it will be better so as to avoid any disagreement concerning this case, also because the Prophet (PBUH) appointed Abû Bakr instead of himself to lead the prayer during the Prophet's last illness[7]. The Prophet (PBUH) thus led people in prayer sitting and appointed Abû Bakr to lead them on his behalf, to show that it is permissible to do both things; and Allah knows best.

The imamate of the one in a continual state of ritual impurity is invalid. This continual state of ritual impurity includes enuresis, uncontrolled passing of wind continuously and the like. Yet, it is only permissible for the one afflicted with such a disease to lead those in the same state as his. However, if a healthy person performs prayer behind such an *imâm*, his prayer will be invalid, because in such a prayer there is a defect which is not to be mended, since he (the *imâm*) performs prayer while he discharges impure matters, which contradicts one's purity. The prayer of such a person is valid only for necessity and his imamate is to be only with that who is like him, as they are the same concerning the continual discharge of the impure matter.

If one performs prayer behind another one who is in a state of ritual impurity, or his body, garment or place of prayer is impure, without knowing about this *imâm*'s impurity or ritual impurity until prayer is finished, this person's payer will be valid but not the *imâm*'s. This view is according to the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"If the one in a state of janâbah[8] *leads the people in prayer, he is to perform his prayer again, while the prayer of those behind him is valid."*[9]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah says:

> *"This is the way in which the Rightly-Guided Caliphs have performed prayer. It could happen that they lead people in prayer and when they knew that they had been junub after the prayer was finished, they would perform their prayer again and would not order those led in prayer to perform prayer again. If the imâm or those led in prayer knew that he was in a state of ritual impurity or that there was impure matter present during the prayer, their prayer would be invalid."*[10]

The imamate of the illiterate person is invalid. Illiterate here means the one who does not memorize the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)* or memorizes it but recites it improperly, such as making grammatical mistakes in words, which change their meaning. These mistakes include, for example, saying, "...upon whom I have bestowed favor" instead of saying, ***"...upon whom You have bestowed favor..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Fâtihah: 7) They include wrong declensions. This illiterate person may mispronounce a letter for another because of a lisp. Thus, his imamate is not valid except when leading illiterate people, since they are equal regarding this defect and are unable to mend it. However, if the illiterate person is able to mend his pronunciation in reciting the Qur'ân, his prayer will not be valid nor that of those performing prayer behind him. This is because that person does not perform an integral part of the prayer though he is able to perform it.

Moreover, it is detestable that one leads people in prayer while most of them justifiably dislike him. The justification of this dislike may be due to a shortcoming in his religiosity. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"(There are) three persons whose prayer does not rise over their ears (i.e. Allah does not accept it): (i) the escapee slave until he returns; (ii) a woman who sleeps while her husband is angry with her; (iii) and a person who leads people in prayer while they are dissatisfied with him."*[11]

(Related by At-Tirmidhî who deems it a *hasan* (good) *hadîth*)

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"If people dislike this person leading them in prayer because of something related to his religiosity, such as lying, injustice, ignorance of religion or innovating in religion and the like, while they like another religious person who is more righteous, truthful and versed than him, then the latter should assume the imamate, not the one whom they*

dislike. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) (also) said, ['(There are) three persons whose prayer does not rise over their ears (i.e. Allah does not accept it): (i) a person who leads people in prayer while they are dissatisfied with him; (ii) a man who comes to the prayer too late, after it is finished; (iii) and a man who takes into slavery an emancipated male or female slave.' "[12]

Ibn Taymiyah added:

"If there is hostility between the imâm and those led in prayer, such as the hostility among the people of different inclinations and those of different juristic schools, then it is not permissible for him to lead them. This is because the wisdom behind performing prayer in congregation is achieving harmony and accord between Muslims. The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'Do not differ (while standing in prayer i.e. straighten your rows); otherwise your hearts will differ.' "

On the other hand, if the *imâm* is righteous and one of the adherents of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) but the people still dislike him, his imamate is valid and acceptable and the blame is on those people who dislike him. In any case, there should be accord and harmony between the *imâm* in prayer and those led behind him. Both should cooperate in righteousness and piety putting aside any hostility or hatred caused by desires and evil ends. Thus, the *imâm* should do the duty that he owes to those led in prayer, not to cause hardship to them, and have regard for them. On the other hand, those led in prayer should do the duty they owe to their *imâm* and respect him.

Finally, the *imâm* and those led in prayer should tolerate criticism delivered by any of them toward the other, as long as this criticism does not degrade one's piety and sense of honor. All of us have defects; no one is perfect. A poet once said:

Who is the one, with qualities all satisfactory?

It is enough honor that one's defects are countable.

We ask Allah for guidance and success for all people.

Endnotes

1 The Mutazilites (Mu`tazilah): It is an Islamic sect that claims that those who commit cardinal sins are in a state between faith and disbelief. This belief violates that of the Adherents of the *Sunnah* and Muslim Community.

2 The Jahmiyyah: It is an Islamic sect that denies some of the Attributes of Allah, claiming that those attributes are ascribed to people and cannot be ascribed to Allah. This belief violates that of the Adherents of the *Sunnah* and Muslim Community.

3 Ibn Mâjah (1081) [2/5].

4 Muslim (925) [2/352]

5 Al-Bukhârî (722) [2/270] and Muslim (929) [2/354].

6 Muslim (920) [2/351] and its origin was related in Al-Bukhârî (805) [2/357].

7 Al-Bukhârî (687) [2/224] and Muslim (935) [2/357].

8 *Janâbah*: A state of major ritual impurity related to sexual discharge.

9 Ad-Dâraquṭnî (1352) [1/354] and Al-Bayhaqî [2/400].

10 See: '*Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ*' (20/364-570), (23/352).

11 At-Tirmidhî (360) [2/193].

12 See: '*Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ*' [23/373].

Duties of the *Imâm*

The *imâm* in prayer shoulders a great responsibility and if he performs it properly, his reward will be great. The favor of imamate in prayer is well-known; the Prophet (PBUH) and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs have assumed it and have not appointed for it except the best people. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Three persons will be on the hillock of musk on the Day of Resurrection: (i) the person who leads people in prayer and they are well pleased with him..."*

In another *hadîth* the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The reward of him (the imâm in prayer) is like that of those who performed prayer behind him."*

It is permissible for the one who knows that he is qualified and fit for the imamate in prayer to seek it. This is because one of the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) once said to him:

"Appoint me to be the imâm of my people in prayer." The Prophet (PBUH) replied, *"You are their imâm but lead prayer (as light as) the weakest of them can perform"*

What proves that one is allowed to seek imamate is what Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And make us a leader [i.e. example] for the righteous."

(Qur'ân: Al-Furqân: 74)

The one who assumes imamate in prayer should do the following:

- Concern himself with it giving it its due in full as he possibly can, and for this he will be greatly rewarded.
- He should put into his account the conditions of those led in prayer, be understanding of their circumstances and avoid making things difficult for them. He should also invite them to perform the congregational prayer and should not make them disinclined to perform it. This is according to the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

  "If anyone of you leads people in prayer, he should lighten it because among them are the weak, the old and one busy with his needs. And if anyone among you performs prayer alone, then he may prolong (the prayer) as much as he wishes."[1]

  (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth* on the authority of Abû Hurayrah)

  There is also a *hadîth* in the Two *Sahîhs* narrated on the authority of Abû Mas`ûd in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

  "O people! Some of you make people dislike good deeds (the congregational prayer). So whoever among you leads people in prayer should lighten it because among them are the weak, the old and one busy with his needs."[2]

  Besides, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

  "I never performed a light and perfect prayer as I performed behind the Prophet (PBUH)."[3]

  Thereupon, our Prophet (PBUH) is our example in this and in other regards.

Al-Hâfiz says:

"Whoever follows the way of the Prophet (PBUH) and leads the people in prayer performing it as light and perfect as the Prophet's prayer, those behind him (in prayer) will not complain. Lightening the prayer should go along with making it perfect in its integral parts, obligatory acts and acts of the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition). Yet, lightening (i.e. shortening) the prayer is a relative matter traced back to what the Prophet (PBUH) used to do, maintain and order us with, and it should not be related to the wishes of those led in prayer."

Some scholars view that the required lightening of prayer is observing the least degree of perfection in Glorifying Allah and in the other acts of prayer. The least degree of perfection in Glorifying Allah in bowing and prostrating is saying, *"Subhâna Rabbiyal-`Azîm"* (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great") and *"Subhâna Rabbiyal-A`lâ"* (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High") thrice in succession. If those led in prayer, though limited in number, preferred that the *imâm* should prolong the prayer and agreed upon this, then it would be allowed for the *imâm* to prolong the prayer. That is because the harm caused when prolonging the prayer and thereby making people shun the congregational prayer is avoided in this case.

Imâm Ibn Daqîqul-`Îd said:

"The view of faqîhs[4] *maintaining that the imâm should not pronounce tasbîh*[5] *more than thrice, does not contradict what is reported of the Prophet (PBUH) that he said tasbîh more than thrice (in prayer)*[6]. *This is because the Prophet (PBUH) used to prolong prayer fulfilling his Companions' wish of gaining more good deeds which does not make that prayer a prolonged one (in which those who are led complain)."*

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

"The imâm should not exceed what is ordained for him. In most cases, he should do what the Prophet (PBUH) used to do in most cases and prolong the prayer or shorten it as befits the situation, which is the same as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do most of the time."

Imâm An-Nawawî said:

"Scholars said that the reported difference of the Prophet (PBUH) regarding the length of recitation (of the Qur'ân during the congregational prayer) was according to circumstances. The Prophet (PBUH)

used to be aware of the time at which the believers prefer long recitation, and he would act accordingly. He also used to be aware when to lighten the prayer upon their wish justified by an excuse and the like. The Prophet (PBUH) at times intended to prolong the congregational prayer but on hearing the cries of a child, he would cut it short (in case his mother was one of those led in the prayer), as related in the Sahîh Books (Authentic Books of Hadîth)."

It is detestable to lighten the congregational prayer to the extent that those led in prayer could not perform the acts of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), such as reciting a sura of the Qur'ân (along with *Al-Fâtihah*) or pronouncing *tasbîh* thrice in bowing and prostrating. It is an act of the *Sunnah* for the *imâm* to recite the Qur'ân with measured recitation and to be deliberate in pronouncing *tasbîh* and *Tashahhud* so that those led behind him would be able to perform the acts of the *Sunnah* related to *tasbîh* and the like. It is also an act of the *Sunnah* for him to perform bowing and prostrating perfectly. It is an act of the *Sunnah* as well for the *imâm* to prolong the first *rak`ah* (unit of prayer), as Abû Qatâdah narrated:

"The Prophet (PBUH) used to prolong the first rak`ah."[7]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Besides, it is desirable for the *imâm* to prolong bowing when he feels that there is someone about to catch up with the *rak`ah*. The *imâm* thus helps that person to join in the *rak`ah*. This is according to the *hadîth* related by Imâm Ahmad and Abû Dâwûd on the authority of Ibn Abû Awfâ describing the form of the Prophet's prayer stating:

"He (the Prophet) used to stand in the first rak`ah of the Zuhr (Noon) Prayer (for a long time) until no footfall could be heard."[8]

This is unless it would become difficult on those led (in prayer) to wait. If it is difficult for those led in prayer to wait that long, the *imâm* should not wait, for he should pay more respect to those behind him than those who have not joined the prayer yet.

To conclude, the *imâm* should put into his account the circumstances of those performing the prayer behind him. He should keep to completing and perfecting the prayer duly, following in this the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH), working upon his advice and obeying his orders, in which there is good for all.

However, some *imâms* may not give the imamate its due right and responsibility, for they may remain absent from the mosques or come late for the prayer, which causes difficulty to those led in prayer and gives rise to discord and diverts the attention of those led in prayer. Thus, such an *imâm* would be a bad example (who would be) followed by the lazy and those who do not shoulder the responsibility duly. Such an *imâm* should be rebuked, so that he would perform the tasks of imamate properly without causing those led in prayer to shun (the congregational prayer) or hinder the function of the imamate. Besides, he should be dismissed from this position if he does not come to his senses.

O Allah! Grant us success in doing whatever You like and whatever pleases You!

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (703) [2/258], Muslim (1046) [2/407], Ahmad (10285) [2/643], Abû Dâwûd (794) [1/352], At-Tirmidhî (236) [1/461], An-Nasâ'î (822) [1/429] and Ibn Mâjah with the same wording of the next *hadith*.
2 Al-Bukhârî (702) [2/256] and Muslim (1044) [2/406].
3 Muslim (1061) [2/412].
4 *Faqîh*: A scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence.
5 *Tasbîh* (in prayer): Saying, *"Subhâna Rabbiyal-'Azîm"* (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great") while bowing, and *"Subhâna Rabbiyal-A'lâ"* (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High") while prostrating.
6 As related in Abû Dâwûd (888) [1/386] and An-Nasâ'î (1134) [1/574].
7 Al-Bukhârî (759) [2/315] and Muslim (1012) [2/392].
8 Ahmad (19097) [4/484] and Abû Dâwûd (802) [1/354].

Prayer of Those Having Legal Excuses

Those with legal excuses are the sick, the traveler, and those who fear they cannot establish prayer as completely as those without excuses. The Lawgiver[1] has lightened the hardship for the excused Muslims and ordered them to perform prayer as much as they can. This ruling shows the ease and relief intended for Muslims in the *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law), as it always eliminates hardships. Allah says:

"...He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty..." (Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 78)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

"...Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you har dship..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

In addition, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 286)

Further, He says:

> ***"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."***
> (Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If I order you to do something, then do of it as much as you can."*

This is to be added to many other legal texts that indicate the favor of Allah upon His servants and how He granted them ease in whatever He ordained for them. Among the things made easy for Muslims is the prayer of the persons with excuses of sickness, travel, or fear.

First: The Prayer Performed by the Sick

Prayer is not to be abandoned under any circumstances. The Muslim patient must perform prayer standing if he can, and it is permissible for him to lean on a stick, or the like, if he needs this since the related fundamental rule states, *"The means to fulfill an obligation are to be considered obligatory."* It is permissible for a Muslim patient to sit in prayer if he cannot stand due to one of the following reasons (or the like):

- If he is unable to stand
- If it is difficult for him to stand
- If he fears to increase his illness or delay his recovery by standing up

So, the inability of a Muslim patient to stand in prayer is not a condition of the permissibility to sit in prayer. However, little difficulty is not a legal excuse to sit in prayer; only real difficulty is considered in this respect. Scholars unanimously agree that if a Muslim person is unable to stand in obligatory prayer, it is permissible for him to sit. Moreover, there is no need for him to re-perform his prayer again when he gets well; his reward does not decrease; and the way he sits is to be according to the way he desires, for the Lawgiver does not ordain a specific way of sitting (for the patient), so in whatever manner he sits, it is permissible.

If a Muslim patient cannot sit in prayer and it causes him a real difficulty to sit, then it is permissible for him to lie on his side facing the *qiblah*[2]. It is desirable for him in this case to lie on his right side. If there is no one to help him face the *qiblah* and he cannot face the *qiblah* himself, then it is permissible for him to perform prayer facing whatever direction he can face.

If a Muslim patient cannot lie on his side in prayer, it is permissible for him to lie on his back, making his legs face the *qiblah* if possible. If a Muslim patient sits in prayer or if he lies on his side or back and cannot prostrate, then it is sufficient for him to beckon bowing and prostration with his head, making his head a bit lower to beckon prostration than in bowing. If a Muslim patient sits in prayer and can prostrate, it is obligatory for him to prostrate and it is not sufficient then to beckon prostration with his head.

The proof of the legal permission detailed previously is the *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and the Compilers of *Sunan* on the authority of `Imrân Ibn Husayn (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated:

> *"I had hemorrhoids so I asked the Prophet (PBUH) how I could perform prayer. He (PBUH) replied, 'Perform prayer while standing and if you cannot, perform it while sitting and if you cannot do (even) that, then perform it lying on your side.' "*[3]

An-Nasâ'î added in his narration that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"...And if you cannot, perform prayer lying on your back."*

In addition, Allah says:

> ***"...Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 286)
>
> Here, we should draw the attention to those Muslims who give up prayer when they are sick or when they have had surgical operations, claiming that they cannot perform the acts of prayer properly, or they cannot perform ablution, or their clothes are impure or any other excuses. They commit a big mistake since a Muslim is not permitted to give up prayer when he cannot perform some of its conditions, integral parts, or obligations, but he must perform prayer as much as he can as Allah says:
>
> ***"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

A Muslim patient may say, "When I get well, I will make up for the prayers I missed during the days of my illness." This is, legally considered, either ignorance or negligence in religion for the prayer is to be performed at its due time as much as one can and it is not permitted to be delayed until one misses its due time. Hence, there should be much attention paid to such a matter and, besides, there should be religious awareness in hospitals. Moreover, hospitals should recognize the patients' conditions concerning performing prayer and other legal obligations that they are in need to know.

The aforementioned legal rulings concern whoever has a legal excuse from the beginning of prayer until its end. However, there are some cases in which a Muslim may have a legal excuse for only a part of his prayer such as:

- One may start prayer when one is standing and then feels that one cannot stand anymore while performing it.
- One may start prayer when one is not able to stand and then feels that one can stand while performing it.
- One may start prayer when one is sitting and then feels that one cannot sit anymore while performing it.
- One may start prayer when one is lying on one's side and then one feels that one can sit.

In such cases, one must shift to the position that legally suits one's ability and it is obligatory then to complete one's prayer in this state. This is because Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Thus, one is to shift to the standing posture when one is able, and one is to shift to the sitting posture when one is unable to stand, and so on. If one is able to stand and sit but cannot bow or prostrate, one is to beckon bowing with one's head while standing, and beckon prostration with one's head while sitting to make a difference (between bowing and prostration) as much as one can.

A Muslim patient is permitted to perform prayer lying on his back though he is able to stand if a trustworthy Muslim doctor tells him that he cannot recover except when he performs prayer while lying on his back. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) performed prayer while sitting when the right side of his body was injured[4]. Also, Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) did not prostrate in her prayer when she suffered from ophthalmia[5].

Prayer enjoys a great importance in Islam and a Muslim must establish prayer whether he is healthy or sick, as a patient is not legally excused to give up prayer, but rather, it is obligatory upon him to perform it in whatever condition. So, a Muslim must establish prayer as Allah, Exalted be He, has ordained. We invoke Allah to guide us to what satisfies Him.

Second: The prayer of riders

A Muslim rider is considered one of the excused as long as he can be hurt when dismounting his animal. Some cases of possible harm are:

- When there is mud or it is raining
- When he cannot remount his animal if he descends
- When he fears to miss his companions
- When he fears an enemy or a wild animal

In such cases and the like, it is permissible for a rider to perform prayer while riding his animal or the like. This came in the *hadîth* narrated on the authority of Ya`lâ Ibn Murrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions were on a journey when the time of prayer became due and it rained. At that time they were on a pathway, the sky was raining from above them and it was wet below. Therefore, Allah's Messenger (PBUH) ordered that the prayer call (adhân) and the immediate prayer call (iqâmah) be pronounced while he was on his she-camel and then he proceeded on his she-camel and led them in prayer (only) beckoning (bowing and prostration) and making the prostration gesture lower than the one for bowing."*
>
> (Related by Ahmad and At-Tirmidhî)[6]

It is obligatory for a Muslim who performs prayer while riding his animal (or what takes the same ruling like a car...etc) to face the *qiblah* if possible. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces [i.e. yourselves] toward it [in prayer]..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 144)

One must also do whatever one is able to perform of bowing, prostrating and tranquility in prayer as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So fear Allah as much as you are able..."

(Qur'ân: At-Taghâbun: 16)

Thus, one is not legally required to do what is beyond one's capacity. If a Muslim riding his animal cannot face the *qiblah*, then it is not obligatory upon him to face it and he is to face any direction in prayer. Likewise, a passenger on a plane is to perform prayer as much as he can; he may stand, sit, bow, prostrate or beckon (bowing and prostration) with his head (according to the situation), but he must face the *qiblah* for it is possible (to do so).

Third: The Prayer of a Traveler

A traveler is one of the excused persons for it is permissible for him to shorten the prayer consisting of four *rak'ah*s (units of prayer) to only two *rak'ah*s as stated in the Noble Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), and the consensus of Muslim scholars. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And when you travel throughout the land, there is no blame upon you for the shortening of prayer..."

(Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 101)

Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) performed only shortened prayers on his journeys[7]. Furthermore, on journeys, shortening the prayer is better than completing it according to the majority of scholars. It is narrated in the Two Sahîhs that 'Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

"When the prayer was enjoined (by Allah), it was two rak'ahs (units of prayer) only (in every prayer) both when in residence or on a journey. Then the prayers performed on journey remained the same, but (the rak'ahs of) the prayer for non-travelers were increased."[8]

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"The prayer performed on journeys is of two rak'ahs. This is the complete prayer without shortening."[9]

A Muslim on a journey is to start shortening the prayer as soon as he leaves his town or city as Allah permits the shortening of prayer for those who travel through the land. Before leaving his town, a Muslim is not legally considered a traveler through the land (and hence he is not permitted to shorten the prayer). The Prophet (PBUH) used to shorten the prayer as soon as he left his hometown. So, if a person does not travel from the residential land, he is not considered a traveler.

A traveler is permitted to shorten the prayer even if he frequently travels, as in the case of a mail carrier or a taxi driver who spends most of his time on the way between towns.

It is permissible for a traveler to combine the *Zuhr* Prayer and the *`Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer at the due time of either of them, and, likewise, to combine the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer and the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer at the due time of either of them. That is because what makes it permissible for the traveler to shorten prayer makes it permissible for him to combine prayers as well.

However, shortening prayer is a temporary permission valid when there is a necessity, as in the case when a traveler is in haste on his journey. Mu`âdh (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"On the Battle of Tabûk, when the Prophet (PBUH) had gone forth before the sun passed the meridian, he would delay the Zuhr Prayer and combine it with the `Asr Prayer, performing them together. But when he proceeded after the sun had passed the meridian, he would perform the Zuhr and the `Asr Prayers (at the time of the Zuhr) and then he would proceed. (He acted similarly for the Maghrib Prayer.) When the sun had set before he proceeded, he would delay the Maghrib Prayer and combine it with the `Ishâ' Prayer, performing them together. But when he proceeded after sunset, he would perform the `Ishâ' Prayer and the Maghrib Prayer at the time of the Maghrib Prayer."*
>
> (Related by Ahmad and At-Tirmidhî)[10]

When a traveler stops on his journey, to take a rest, it is better for him to perform each prayer shortened at its due time, not to combine prayers. If it is difficult for a Muslim patient to perform each prayer at its due time, then he is permitted to combine the *Zuhr* Prayer and the *`Asr* Prayer (at the due time of either of them), and to combine the *Maghrib* Prayer and the *`Ishâ'* Prayer (at the due time of either of them).

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

> *"Allah has ordained shortening of prayer to remove difficulties and make things easy for the Muslim nation. So, a Muslim is permitted to combine prayers when necessary. All hadîths (related to this matter) imply that it is permissible to combine two prayers at the due time*

of either of them in order to remove any possible hardship caused to the Prophet's nation. Thus, it is permissible to combine prayers if it is to cause hardship if not done. This proves that it is permissible with greater reason for a Muslim patient to combine (two) prayers at the due time of either of them as long as it is difficult for him to perform each prayer at its due time."[11]

Ibn Taymiyah also said:

"Patients can combine the prayer according to the Sunnah for it is narrated in two hadîths that the Prophet (PBUH) ordered a mustahâdah[12] *to combine the prayer."*[13]

By means of analogical deduction with the case of a *mustahâdah*, the combining of prayer is permitted for every Muslim who cannot purify for every prayer, such as those inflicted with enuresis, a continuously bleeding wound, or a permanent nosebleed. The Prophet (PBUH) said to Hamnah Bint Jahsh when she asked him about *istihâdah*[14] (vaginal bleeding other than menstruation):

"...But if you are strong enough to delay the Zuhr Prayer and advance the 'Asr prayer, to wash, and then combine the Zuhr and the 'Asr Prayers; (and) to delay the Maghrib Prayer and advance the 'Ishâ' Prayer, to wash, and then combine the two prayers, do so."

(Related by Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, and At-Tirmidhî and deemed sahîh (authentic) by the latter)[15]

It is permissible to combine the *Maghrib* Prayer and the *'Ishâ'* Prayer, in particular, if there is rain that wets clothes and causes difficulty (for those who go to the mosque). The Prophet (PBUH) combined the *Maghrib* Prayer and the *'Ishâ'* Prayer in a rainy night,[16] and so did Abû Bakr and 'Umar afterwards[17].

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"According to the soundest view of scholars, it is permissible for a Muslim to combine prayers because of mud or strong cold wind in a dark night, even if it has stopped raining. This is more incumbent than performing each prayer at its due time at home. Moreover, to abandon combining congregational prayers in mosques to perform prayer at home is a bid'ah (a matter innovated in religion) that contradicts the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition). It is an act of the Sunnah to perform the Five (Obligatory) Prayers in congregation in the mosque, and this is more due, according to the unanimous agreement of Muslims,

than performing prayers at home. In addition, congregational prayer combined in the mosque is more due than performing prayers at home individually, according to the unanimous agreement of the scholars who maintain the aforementioned permissibility to combine prayers (due to bad weather), such as Mâlik, Ash-Shâfi`î, and Ahmad."[18]

It is better for one permitted to combine prayers to combine them according to what suits his/her situation most. On the Day of `Arafah, it is better (for the pilgrims) to combine the *Zuhr* Prayer and the *`Asr* Prayer at the time of the former,[19] but in Muzdalifah, it is better (for the pilgrims) to combine the *Maghrib* Prayer and the *`Ishâ'* Prayer at the time of the latter, according to what the Prophet (PBUH) did (in his *Hajj*)[20]. On the Day of `Arafah, pilgrims combine the *Zuhr* and the *`Asr* Prayers at the time of the former in order to continue staying at `Arafah Mount (without interruption), but in Muzdalifah, they combine the *Maghrib* and the *`Ishâ'* Prayers at the time of the latter to continue moving toward Muzdalifah.

In general, it is an act of the *Sunnah* for pilgrims to combine prayers on the Day of `Arafah and in Muzdalifah but in circumstances other than that, it is permissible when necessary. However, when there is no necessity, it is better for a traveler to perform each prayer at its due time. During the days of his *Hajj*, the Prophet (PBUH) combined prayers only on the Day of `Arafah and in Muzdalifah, but he (PBUH) did not combine prayers in Minâ because he was to stay there. So the Prophet (PBUH) used to combine prayers only when he was in a hurry on a journey. We invoke Allah to guide us to useful knowledge and good deeds.

Fourth: The Fear Prayer

The Fear Prayer is ordained for Muslims during every legal fighting such as fighting with the disbelievers and the oppressors, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... If you fear that those who disbelieve may disrupt [or attack] you..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 101)

Those with whom Muslims are permitted to fight are determined by means of analogical deduction with this Qur'anic verse. However, the Fear Prayer is not permissible during prohibited fighting. The proof of the legality of the Fear Prayer is stated in the Noble Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), and the consensus of Muslim scholars. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And when you [i.e. the commander of an army] are among them and lead them in prayer, let a group of them stand [in prayer] with you and let them carry their arms. And when***

> ***they have prostrated, let them be [in position] behind you and have the other group come forward which has not [yet] prayed and let them pray with you, taking precaution and carrying their arms..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 102)

Imâm Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) states, *"Five or six ways of performing the Fear Prayer are authentically narrated about the Prophet (PBUH)."* The Fear Prayer was ordained during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) and it is still legal to be performed until the end of the time. The Companions and most of the Muslim scholars unanimously agree on that, with the exception of a slight inconsiderable dispute.

The Fear Prayer is to be performed when necessary, both on journey and in residence, if Muslims fear that the enemy may attack them, as the cause of its permissibility is the fighting not the traveling. In residence, it is permissible to shorten only the way of performing the Fear Prayer, not the number of *rak'ahs* (units of prayer). Yet, on journeys, the Fear Prayer is to be performed by shortening the number of *rak'ahs*, if the prayer consists of four *rak'ahs*, and by shortening the way of prayer. The Fear Prayer is ordained in two conditions: The first is when the enemy is of those whom Muslims are permitted to fight, and the second is when Muslims fear to be attacked while performing prayer. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...If you fear that those who disbelieve may disrupt [or attack] you..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 101)

And He says:

> ***"...Those who disbelieve wish that you would neglect your weapons and your baggage so they could come down upon you in one [single] attack..."*** (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 102)

One way of performing the Fear Prayer is narrated about the Prophet (PBUH) in the *hadîth* on the authority of Sahl Ibn Abû Hathmah Al-Ansârî (may Allah be pleased with him). Imâm Ahmad considers this way (narrated by Sahl) as the preponderant view for it is similar to the way mentioned in the Noble Qur'ân. This way of performing the Fear Prayer is distinguished by carefulness in performing prayer, caution with regard to fighting, and causing uncomfortableness to the enemy. The Prophet (PBUH) performed the Fear Prayer in the aforementioned way during the Battle of *Dhâtur-Riqâ'*. It is to be performed as Sahl narrated:

"One row lined up behind him (PBUH) while another row (lined up) facing the enemy. The Prophet (PBUH) led the row that was with him in one rak`ah (unit of prayer), and he stayed in the standing posture while that row performed (another rak`ah) by themselves and went away, lining in the face of the enemy. The other group came and he (the Prophet) offered his remaining rak`ah with them, and then, remained sitting until they completed their prayer by themselves, and he then finished the prayer along with them."[21]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Muslim related another way of performing the Fear Prayer on the authority of Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"I witnessed the Fear Prayer with Allah's Messenger (PBUH). We drew ourselves up in two rows, while the enemy was between us and the qiblah. Allah's Messenger (PBUH) pronounced takbîr[22] *and we all pronounced it. He then bowed and we all bowed. He then raised his head from bowing and we all raised (our heads). He then went down in prostration along with the row close to him, and the rear row faced the enemy. When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) completed the prostration and stood up and the row near to him also did this, the rear row prostrated themselves; then they stood up. Then the rear row went to the front and the front row went to the rear. Then Allah's Messenger (PBUH) bowed down and we all bowed. He then raised his head from bowing and we raised (our heads). He and the row close to him, which was in the rear (in the first rak`ah), went down in prostration, whereas the rear row faced the enemy. When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) completed the prostration and stood up and the row near to him also did this, the rear row prostrated themselves. Then Allah's Messenger (PBUH) pronounced the final salutations and we all pronounced the salutation."*[23]

A third way of performing the Fear Prayer is narrated on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"The Prophet (PBUH) led one of the two groups in one rak`ah (unit of prayer) in the Fear Prayer, performing bowing once and prostration twice, while the other group faced the enemy. Then the members of the first group went back and replaced their companions, facing the enemy. Then they came and the Prophet (PBUH) led them in one

rak`ah. Then he pronounced the taslîm,*[24] *and then the members of the first group performed one rak`ah and those (i.e. the members of the second group) performed one rak`ah."[25]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, and An-Nasâ'i[26] relate a fourth way of performing the Fear Prayer in which the Prophet (PBUH) performed the Fear Prayer leading each group separately and pronouncing *taslîm* (with every group before he started prayer with the other one).

A fifth way of performing the Fear Prayer is narrated on the authority of Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"We went with the Prophet (PBUH) until we reached Dhâtur-Riqâ`..."

Jâbîr continued the narration until he said:

"Then the immediate prayer call (iqâmah) was announced and the Prophet (PBUH) performed two rak`ahs (of the Fear Prayer) with one of the two groups, and that batch went back, and he performed two rak`ahs with the other group. Thus, Allah's Messenger (PBUH) performed four rak`ahs but the people performed two rak`ahs only."[27]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

The aforementioned ways of performing the Fear Prayer are to be performed as long as fear does not increase. But when fear increases, through continuous acts of fighting such as stabbing, beating, attacking and retreating, and it becomes impossible to divide the Muslim soldiers to perform prayer at its due time mentioned previously, then, Muslims are to perform prayer as possible as they can. They may perform prayer while standing or riding, facing the *qiblah* or not, beckoning bowing and prostration with their heads as much as they can. They are not permitted to delay prayer as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And if you fear [an enemy, then pray], on foot or riding..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 239)

While performing the Fear Prayer, it is desirable for a Muslim to carry a weapon to defend himself as long as such a weapon is not too heavy for him, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And let them carry their arms..." (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 102)

In addition, the same rulings concerning the aforementioned case of great fear are ordained for Muslims while escaping from the enemy, torrents or wild animals, or while chasing the enemy. In such cases, a Muslim is permitted to perform prayer riding or on foot, to face the *qiblah* or any other direction, and to beckon the bowing and prostration with his head.

In conclusion, we can get some important lessons from the previously explained astonishing and accurate arrangement of performing the Fear Prayer:

1. The importance of prayer in Islam, especially the congregational prayer, for they were not abandoned even in such critical situations.
2. The perfection of the *Sharî`ah* (Islamic Law) is evident as it ordains for every case what best suits it.
3. No difficulty is intended for the Muslim nation as the *Sharî`ah* is moderate and valid for all eras and in all places.

We invoke Allah to help us adhere to His *Sharî`ah* until we die, for He is the Hearing and the Responsive.

Endnotes

1 The Lawgiver of *Sharî`ah* (Islamic Law) is Allah, Exalted be He; the term can also refer to the Prophet (PBUH) as he never ordained but what was revealed to him by Allah.
2 The *qiblah*: The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka`bah.
3 Al-Bukhârî (1117) [2/758].
4 Al-Bukhârî (805) [2/35] and Muslim (920) [2/351]
5 Ibn Abû Shaybah (2801) [1/243] and Al-Bayhaqî (3674) [2/436].
6 Ahmad (17503) [4/174] and At-Tirmidhî (411) [2/266].
7 Ad-Darâqutnî (2275,2276) [2/168] and Al-Bayhaqî [3/141].
8 Al-Bukhârî (350) [1/601] and Muslim (1568) [3/199].
9 An-Nasâ'î (1419) [2/123] and Ibn Mâjah (1036) [1/556].
10 Abû Dâwûd (1208) [2/10] and At-Tirmidhî (552) [2/438].
11 See: *Majmû`ul Fatâwâ* (26/64).
12 *Mustahâdah*: A woman in a state of *istihâdah* (i.e. a woman having vaginal bleeding other than menstruation).
13 See: *Majmû`ul Fatâwâ* (24/72,74)
14 *Istihâdah*: Vaginal bleeding other than menstruation.
15 Ahmad [6/381,382,439-440] and At-Tirmidhî (128) [1/221]
16 Al-Bukhârî (543) and Muslim (705).

17 `Abdur-Razzâq in his *Muṣannaf* (4440) [2/556].
18 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* (24/38,29).
19 Muslim (2941) [4/402].
20 Al-Bukhârî (1674) [3/660] and Muslim (309) [5/38].
21 Al-Bukhârî (4129) [7/526] and Muslim (1945) [3/366].
22 *Takbîr*: Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
23 Muslim (1942) [3/364].
24 *Taslîm*: Saying the final *Salâms* in prayer (saying, "*As-salâmu `alaykum wa Raḥmatullâh*" i.e. "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah") when concluding prayer.
25 Al-Bukhârî (4133) [7/527] and Muslim (1939) [3/363].
26 Abû Dâwûd (1248) [2/29] and An-Nasâ'î (1552) [2/198].
27 Al-Bukhârî (4136) [7/532] and Muslim (1946) [3/367].

Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer

The day of this prayer, Friday, is the best day of the week, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Among the most excellent of your days is Friday."*[1]

In another *hadîth* he (PBUH) said:

> *"We (Muslims) are the last (to come) but (will be) the first on the Day of Resurrection though the former nations were given the Scriptures before us. This (Friday) was their day of celebration which was made compulsory for them but they differed about it. So Allah gave us the guidance for it (Friday) and all the other people follow us in this respect."*[2]

Imâm Muslim recorded that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"It was Friday from which Allah diverted those who were before us. For the Jews (the day set aside for prayer) was Saturday, and for the Christians it was Sunday. When Allah sent us (Muslims), He guided us to Friday (as the day of prayer) for us."*[3]

Allah ordained the meeting of Muslims on Friday to draw their attention to His great favors upon them. The Friday sermon is ordained to remind Muslims of the favors of Allah and incite them to be grateful (to Him). The *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer is ordained to be performed by midday to give the Muslims (living in the same residential area) the chance to gather in one mosque. In addition, Allah ordered the believers to attend this meeting, listen to the sermon, and perform the *Jumu`ah* Prayer as He says:

> ***"O you who have believed, when [the adhân] is called for the prayer on the day of Jumu`ah [Friday], then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you, if you only knew."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Jumu`ah: 9)

Ibnul-Qayyim said:

> *"It is of the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH) to honor this day (Friday), and to favor it with special acts of worship which he does not perform on other days. Scholars, as well as the followers of Ash-Shâfi`î, differ on which day is better: Friday or the Day of `Arafah? The Prophet (PBUH) used to recite the Suras of As-Sajdah (the Prostration)[4] and Al-Insân (Man)[5] in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer on Friday".*[6] [7]

Ibnul-Qayyim added:

> *"I heard Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah saying, 'The Prophet (PBUH) used to recite these two Suras (As-Sajdah and Al-Insân) in the Fajr Prayer on Friday as they deal with events that happened or will happen on Friday such as the creation of Âdam (Adam), the Resurrection, and the gathering of servants (to the account in the Hereafter). Thus, reciting these two Suras every Friday reminds the Muslim nation of the aforementioned events and consequently comes the prostration of recitation (in the Sura of As-Sajdah). So, the prostration of recitation is not intended in particular here and the one performing prayer should not mistakenly recite a prostration-containing verse from whatever sura in the Qur'ân (believing that it is an act of the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) for Fridays."*[8]

There are some special features to be observed on Friday or on the night preceding it:

It is desirable to confer blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH) frequently. Al-Bayhaqî records that the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"Confer blessings upon me frequently on Friday and the night preceding it."*[9] [10]

The *Jumu'ah* (Friday) Prayer is one of the most distinguishing acts of worship of Friday, as it is of the most stressed obligations of Islam and of the greatest assemblies of Muslims. The Prophet (PBUH) said that he who leaves the *Jumu'ah* Prayer (continuously) three times on account of slackness, Allah seals over his heart[11].

Among the acts of worship to be observed on Friday is bathing to attend the Friday Prayer, as it is a stressed act of the *Sunnah*. Some scholars view this bathing as obligatory, and others maintain that it is obligatory only for one who needs to remove bad smell from his body.

In addition, it is desirable to apply perfume on Friday, which is better than applying perfume on the other days of the week.

Moreover, it is desirable to go early to the mosque for the *Jumu'ah* Prayer and occupy oneself with performing supererogatory prayers, remembering Allah, and reciting the Noble Qur'ân until the *imâm* (i.e., leader in prayer) comes to deliver the sermon.

It is obligatory to listen to the sermon, and if one does not listen to it (occupying oneself with anything other than the sermon), then one commits an evil act. The Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"He who commits an evil act will have no (reward for) Friday."*[12]

Speaking is prohibited during the sermon as it is related in the *Musnad* (Ascribed Traditions of Hadîth) of Imâm Ahmad that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever asks his companion to keep quiet (while the imâm is delivering the sermon) will have no (reward for) Friday."*[13]

Furthermore, among the acts of worship to be observed on Friday is reciting the Sura of *Al-Kahf* (*the Cave*)[14]. It is authentically narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone recites the Sura of Al-Kahf on Friday, a light will shine from under his feet up to the heaven and it will shine for him on the Day of Resurrection, and the sins he committed between the two Fridays will be forgiven."*[15]
>
> (Related by Al-Hâkim and Al-Bayhaqî)

There is an hour (a period of time) on Friday during which Allah definitely responds to supplications. In the Two *Sahîhs* it is recorded on the authority of Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"There is an hour (a period of time) on Friday and if a Muslim gets it while performing prayer and asks something from Allah, then Allah will definitely meet his demand."*[16]

And he (the Prophet) pointed out the shortness of that time with his hands.

Among the significant acts of worship on Friday is the sermon which is intended to praise Allah and glorify Him, declare the testimony of His Oneness and His Messenger's message, and to remind His servants (of the affairs of religion).

There are so many special acts of worship to be observed on Friday (or its preceding night) which Ibnul-Qayyim, in his book entitled *Zâdul-Ma`âd* (*Provisions for the Hereafter*), mentioned, making them one hundred and thirty three. Nevertheless, many Muslims neglect this day giving it no more attention than any other day, some devote it for sleep and sloth, and others make it a day of diversion, play and heedlessness, away from remembering Allah. Consequently, the number of Muslims performing the *Fajr* Prayer (of Friday) in congregation in the mosques is noticeably decreasing. There is neither might nor power except in Allah!

It is desirable for a Muslim to go early to the mosque for the *Jumu`ah* Prayer and perform two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) when he enters the mosque as a prayer of greeting. He is permitted to perform more voluntary prayers if it is early for the *Jumu`ah* Prayer, as the *Salaf* (early Muslim scholars) used to go early to the mosque for the *Jumu`ah* Prayer and perform voluntary prayers until the *imâm* came to deliver the sermon.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"It is more entitled for a Muslim who goes early to the mosque for the Jumu`ah Prayer to perform voluntary prayers until the imâm comes (to deliver the sermon). It is stated in a sahîh (authentic) hadîth that the Prophet (PBUH) said, '...Then he may perform prayer as much as (Allah has) willed for him...'*[17] *Moreover, the words of the Prophet (PBUH) urge Muslims to perform voluntary prayers when they enter the mosque before the sermon on Friday, without determining a specific time (to do that). It is also narrated that the Companions used to perform voluntary prayers as much as they could when they entered the mosque before the sermon on Friday*[18]*. It could happen that one of them perform ten, twelve*

or eight rakahs (units of prayer), and sometimes more or less than that. That is why the majority of scholars agree that there is no specific time or number for the voluntary prayer before the Jumu`ah Prayer and this voluntary prayer is considered a good deed, not a sunnah râtibah (a regularly-observed supererogatory prayer). Thus, according to the soundest view, a Muslim is not legally blamed whether or not he performs voluntary prayer before the Jumu`ah Prayer. However, if ignorant people believe that it is a sunnah râtibah, then, in this case, giving up this voluntary prayer will be better."[19]

It was mentioned previously that there is no *sunnah râtibah* before the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer (but only a voluntary prayer). However, there is a *sunnah râtibah* after the *Jumu`ah* Prayer for it is recorded in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"When any one of you performs the Jumu`ah Prayer, he should perform four (supererogatory rak`ahs (units of prayer)) afterwards."[20]

It is also recorded in the Two *Sahîhs* that the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform two (supererogatory) *rak`ahs* after the *Jumu`ah* Prayer[21]. To reconcile the two *hadîths*, it can be said that when the Prophet (PBUH) performed this supererogatory prayer at home, he made it two *rak`ahs* and when he (PBUH) performed it in the mosque, he made it four *rak`ahs*. It is also permissible for a Muslim to perform six supererogatory *rak`ahs* after the *Jumu`ah* Prayer according to Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated:

"When the Prophet (PBUH) performed Jumu`ah Prayer, he used to proceed to perform two (supererogatory) rak`ahs, and then proceed to perform four (supererogatory) rak`ahs."

A Muslim who goes early to the mosque is more entitled to sit in the front rows. It is not right that a Muslim reserves a place in the mosque by putting a prayer rug, a stick or a pair of shoes, and then comes later because this behavior deprives those who come early from this place. Some scholars maintain that it is permissible for whoever comes early to the mosque to perform prayer in such a reserved place and to remove anything (put in it for reservation) because those going early to the mosque are more entitled to perform prayer in the first row. Besides, such reservation is considered an act of unlawful seizure of a place.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Before going for the Jumu`ah Prayer, or any other prayer, many people send sheets (carpets) and the like to reserve a place in the mosque, which is forbidden according to the unanimous agreement of Muslims; rather it is prohibited. Scholars have two different views whether the prayer of such people is valid on such a sheet or not, as they unlawfully seize a place in the mosque by spreading such an object, depriving others from their right to sit in such a place when they come early. A Muslim is to go, himself, to the mosque and, hence, if he sends a sheet (to reserve a place) and comes later he violates the Sharî`ah in two ways. The first is his delay, though he is ordered to go early, and the second is his unlawful seizure of the place and depriving those going early from performing prayer therein and from completing the rows in succession, one after another. Moreover, such a person commits another mistake when he disturbs the people, who came before him, while surpassing their rows, passing over their necks to reach the reserved place."*[22]

It is among the rulings on the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) that a Muslim should perform two short (light) *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) if he enters the mosque while the *imâm* is delivering the sermon. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If any one of you comes for the Jumu`ah Prayer when the imâm has already come out (to deliver the sermon), (even then) he should perform two rak`ahs."*[23]

This *hadîth* is recorded by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim and in the narration of Muslim, he (PBUH) added, *"...and should make them short."*[24] However, if he sits before performing the two supererogatory *rak`ahs*, he should stand and perform them, for the Prophet (PBUH) told the man who sat before performing these two *rak`ahs*, *"Get up and perform two rak`ahs."*[25]

It is not permissible for a Muslim to speak while the *imâm* is delivering the sermon as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"So when the Qur'ân is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 204)

Some exegetes of the Qur'ân maintain that this verse was revealed concerning the Friday Sermon, and this sermon is called Qur'ân as there are always Qur'anic verses recited in it. Concerning the other view that this verse was revealed concerning prayer, it can be said that it (*Jumu`ah* Prayer) generally includes the sermon. Ahmad relates that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone even says (to his companion sitting besides him), 'Sahin (i.e. shush)'*[26] *(while the imâm is delivering the sermon), it will be considered uttering ill speech. And whoever utters ill speech, there will be no (reward for) Jumu`ah for him."*

In another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever talks while the imâm is delivering the (Friday) sermon is like a donkey that carries volumes (of books), and whoever asks him to keep quiet and listen, there will be no (reward for) Friday for him."*[27]

What is meant in this *hadîth* is that there will be no complete reward for Friday Prayer for him. Besides, it is recorded in the Two *Sahîhs*, on the authority of Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If you ask your companion to keep quiet and listen while the imâm is delivering the sermon, then you have uttered an ill speech."*[28]

This ill speech is considered a sin even if the speech is the mere word "listen" that is originally considered enjoining what is right. So other words uttered while the *imâm* is delivering the sermon are more entitled to be prohibited.

While delivering the sermon, the *imâm* is permitted to talk to any of the persons led in prayer and they are permitted to speak to him for any legal interest. It happened in many situations that the Prophet (PBUH) talked and listened to an inquirer[29]. Also, the Prophet (PBUH) talked and listened to some Companions for the sake of a legal interest or to teach them religious rulings. This kind of speaking is permissible, as it does not distract people's attention while listening to the sermon.

While listening to the sermon, one is not permitted to give charity to a beggar, as he (the beggar), in this case, does an impermissible act so one should not help him to such an act, i.e. speaking while the sermon is delivered. When the preacher confers blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH), it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) for a Muslim to confer blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH), but without raising his voice in order not to distract the attention of others. When the preacher invokes Allah, it is an act of the *Sunnah* for a Muslim to say '*Âmîn* (amen)', raising neither his voice nor his hands.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"While the preacher is delivering the sermon, it is detestable or prohibited by uniform agreement for a Muslim to raise his voice, and neither the prayer caller (muezzin) nor anyone else should raise his voice with conferring blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH) or by doing anything else."*[30]

It is noteworthy that such wrong acts, which Ibn Taymiyah pointed out, are still committed in some countries. Some examples of such acts are raising one's voice when conferring blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH), or some supplications during or before the sermon or between the two sermons. Moreover, some preachers may order those present to commit such acts. This is considered ignorance and innovation in religion which is not permitted to be done.

A Muslim must not greet others if he enters the mosque while the *imâm* is delivering the sermon; rather, he should proceed calmly to any available place in the rows, perform two short *rak'ahs* (units of prayer) as mentioned previously, and sit to listen to the sermon without shaking hands with those near him. During the sermon one is not permitted to play with his hand, foot, beard, clothes and the like, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever touches pebbles (while the imâm is delivering the Friday sermon paying no attention to the sermon) has made an evil act."*

At-Tirmidhî deemed it a *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth*[31]. In another narration, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"...And whoever makes an evil act, no Friday (i.e. no reward for the Friday Prayer) will be recorded for him."*

This is because playing prevents devoutness.

During the sermon, a Muslim should not turn right or left, nor look at the people (around him) in order not to be distracted from listening to the sermon. Rather, he should face the preacher (looking at him) as the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) used to face the Prophet (PBUH) during his sermon[32]. If one sneezes, one should praise Allah secretly. For the sake of a legal interest, a Muslim is permitted to talk before or after the sermon, or during the interval between the two sermons. However, one should not talk about worldly matters.

In general, the two sermons of Friday (the sermon of Friday is divided into two parts) are extremely important in Islam as they contain the recitation of the Noble Qur'ân, some *hadîths* of the Prophet (PBUH), useful guidance, good instruction, and remembrance of the days of Allah[33]. So, the preacher and listeners must pay attention to the two sermons. The Friday sermon is not an ordinary speech delivered in clubs, or during celebrations or usual meetings.

It is worthy mentioning that during the Friday sermon, some listeners raise their voices, seeking refuge with Allah when they hear a warning, or invoking Allah when they hear some mentioning of the Paradise or of the rewards of Allah. This act is not permissible and it is included in the acts forbidden to be done during the sermon. The legal texts indicate that talking during the Friday sermon renders good deeds worthless and whoever talks during Friday sermon will have no reward for the Friday Prayer, and will be like a donkey that carries volumes (of books). So, one must guard oneself against such forbidden acts and warn others to guard themselves against them.

Faqîhs (may Allah have mercy on them) mention that the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer is an independent obligation, not a substitute for the *Zuhr* Prayer. `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The prayer of the traveler is two rak`ahs (units of prayer), the Jumu`ah Prayer is two rak`ahs, the Feast Prayer is two rak`ahs. These prayers are complete not shortened according to what your Prophet (PBUH) said."*

The *Jumu`ah* Prayer differs from the *Zuhr* Prayer in many ways (concerning legal rulings) since the former is better and more stressed than the latter, and more warnings are narrated concerning whoever leaves the *Jumu`ah* Prayer. In addition, the *Jumu`ah* Prayer has some conditions and specialties which the *Zuhr* Prayer does not have. It is not sufficient for any Muslim, for whom the *Jumu`ah* Prayer is obligatory, to perform the *Zuhr* Prayer instead of the *Jumu`ah* Prayer, unless the due time of the latter is over; and only then the *Zuhr* Prayer becomes a substitute.

The *Jumu`ah* Prayer is an individual duty for every legally competent, free and resident male Muslim. Abû Dâwûd relates, with his chain of transmitters, on the authority of Târiq Ibn Shihâb that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"(Performing) the Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer in congregation is obligatory upon every Muslim, with four exceptions; a slave, a woman, a boy, and a sick person."*[34]

The transmitters of this *hadîth* are trustworthy, and it is deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by many scholars. Ad-Dâraqutnî also relates, with his chain of transmitters, on the authority of Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day must perform the Jumu`ah Prayer in congregation, with four exceptions: a sick person, a traveler, a boy or a slave."*[35]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

> *"The Jumu`ah Prayer is obligatory upon every group of people living in permanent houses close together, whether such houses are built with mud, wood, reeds, palm branches, or any other material, as long as they do not depart from such a place in summer or winter. The kind of material is insignificant to the aforementioned legal obligation. The original rule concerning this is that they should be permanently resident and not like nomads who live in tents and move from one place to another, carrying their houses with them whenever they go seeking rain."*[36]

The *Jumu`ah* Prayer is not obligatory upon travelers, who are permitted to shorten prayers as the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions used to travel for *Hajj* or any other purpose and none of them performed the *Jumu`ah* Prayer during travel. The *Jumu`ah* Prayer is not obligatory upon whoever goes on a picnic (and the like) and finds no mosque around and he is to perform the *Zuhr* Prayer (instead of the *Jumu`ah* Prayer). In addition, the *Jumu`ah* Prayer is not obligatory upon women.

Ibnul-Mundhir, as well as other scholars, said:

> *"Scholars unanimously agree that the Jumu`ah Prayer is not obligatory upon women and that if women go to the mosque, listen to Friday Sermon, and perform the Jumu`ah Prayer, this serves instead of performing the Zuhr Prayer."*[37]

Likewise, a traveler or an ill person is permitted to perform the *Jumu`ah* Prayer, instead of the *Zuhr* Prayer, if he is able, for Allah excuses such persons (from performing the *Jumu`ah* Prayer) to lighten difficulties for them.

It is not permissible for a Muslim upon whom the *Jumu`ah* Prayer is obligatory to travel on Friday after meridian unless he performs prayer. Moreover, it is detestable for him to travel, even before meridian, if he is not to perform the *Jumu`ah* Prayer on his way.

There are some legal conditions which make the *Jumu`ah* Prayer valid:

1. The *Jumu`ah* Prayer must be performed at its due time which is a condition for it as the case with other obligatory prayers. Thus, the *Jumu`ah* Prayer is not valid if performed either before or after its due time as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

   "Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times." (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 103)

   It is better and more cautious to perform the *Jumu`ah* Prayer after meridian as it is the time when the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform this prayer. It is a controversial issue to perform the *Jumu`ah* Prayer before meridian. There is no dispute that the end of the time for the *Jumu`ah* Prayer is the same as the end of the time for the *Zuhr* Prayer.

2. Observers of the *Jumu`ah* Prayer must be residents in houses built with any usual material, not like nomads who live in tents and move with their houses from one place to another seeking rain. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) did not order the Arab tribes living around Medina to perform the *Jumu`ah* Prayer.

   If a Muslim catches up with one *rak`ah* (unit of prayer), he can complete his prayer as he has already caught up with the *Jumu`ah* prayer. Al-Bayhaqî records on the authority of Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

   "Whoever could get one rak`ah of the Jumu`ah Prayer (in its proper time) has got the prayer."[38]

   The origin of this *hadîth* is recorded in the Two *Sahîhs*.

   A Muslim misses the *Jumu`ah* Prayer if he gets less than one *rak`ah* of the *Jumu`ah* Prayer, i.e. if he joins the prayer after the *imâm* (i.e., leader in prayer) has risen from bowing in the second *rak`ah*. Then he is to intend to perform the *Zuhr* Prayer and perform four *rak`ahs* as the *Zuhr* Prayer after the *imâm* pronounces the final salutation.

3. The two sermons are considered a condition of the *Jumu`ah* Prayer as the Prophet (PBUH) used to deliver two sermons before performing the *Jumu`ah* Prayer. Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"The Prophet used to deliver two sermons while standing and sit in between them."[39]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

In addition, among the conditions that make the two sermons of the *Jumu`ah* valid is that they must contain words of praise of Allah, declaring the Two Testifications of Faith,[40] conferring blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH), giving advice to fear Allah, as well as good instruction, and the recitation of the Noble Qur'ân (even one verse). Many sermons of preachers nowadays lack some or most of the aforementioned conditions.

Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Contemplating the sermons of the Prophet (PBUH) and those of his Companions, one finds such lessons sufficient to make clear the guidance and the Oneness of Allah. These sermons also explain the Attributes of the Lord, Exalted be He, and the comprehensive principles of faith, call to Allah, show Allah's favors that draw His servants near to Him and mention His days (when His punishment afflicted some of the previous nations) that make His servants fear His punishment. These sermons call Muslims to remember Allah and thank Him so that He may love them. Also, these sermons mention the Majesty of Allah, His Attributes and Names to draw His servants near to Him, and call Muslims to obey, thank, and remember Him so that He may love them. Thus, those who listen to such sermons would leave the mosque while they love Allah and Allah loves them. Years passed and the light of prophethood faded until the laws and orders of Allah become like ceremonies that are performed without fulfilling their objectives. Some recent preachers have considered their own (invented) ceremonies as if they were acts of the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) that must be observed, and violated the obligatory objectives of the Sharî`ah (Islamic Law). These preachers adorn the sermons with so much rhyme and rhetoric that cannot reach the hearts of people and hence they (the sermons) do not fulfill their objectives."[41]

This is what Ibnul-Qayyim said about the sermons at his time and, of course, things have gone worse than what he said, for, nowadays, we find most of the sermons worthless and full of wordiness. Some, or many, contemporary

preachers regard the sermon as a scholastic composition and improvise whatever matter that comes to their minds, either related to the topic or not, making their sermons long and dull. Moreover, some preachers neglect all the legal conditions of the sermon (or at least some of them) and do not adhere to the legal regularities of the sermon (according to the *Sunnah*). Thus, they have so badly affected the standard of the sermons that they (the sermons) no longer fulfill their effective and useful objectives.

Some preachers force irrelevant topics into their sermons that may be difficult for most of those present to understand; they include topics of press, politics, and current events, which do not (religiously) benefit the worshippers. O preachers, you must imitate the model sermon of the Prophet (PBUH) as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 21)

You should focus your subjects on the topics of the Noble Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* that best suit the situation. Your sermon should include the advice to fear Allah and follow good instruction. You should treat in a brief and clear way the (spiritual) diseases of your societies. Often recite the Noble Qur'ân which grants true life to hearts and light to eyes.

It is not a matter of two mere sermons but, rather, what is really meant is their expected effects on society as **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** said:

> *"It is not enough for preachers to dispraise worldly life and mention death. Conventionally, there must be a specific topic for every sermon."*[42]

Thus, a sermon can move hearts to good deeds. Moreover, it is not enough for preachers to dispraise and warn against the worldly life as this is the technique of all the deniers of *Sharî`ah*. Rather, a preacher should incite people to obey Allah, warn them against disobeying Him, call them to Allah, and remind them of His favors.

Ibn Taymiyah added, *"The objective of a sermon is not fulfilled through detrimental brevity that makes the listeners miss such an objective."*[43] When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) delivered a sermon, his eyes would become red, his voice would rise, and his anger would increase so that he was like one giving a warning against the enemy and saying:

> *"The enemy has made a morning attack on you and in the evening too."*[44]

The *faqîhs* (may Allah have mercy on them) view that it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) for the preacher to stand on a pulpit while delivering the Friday Sermon as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do. This is more effective for instruction as the worshippers can see the preacher clearly while he is delivering the sermon. **An-Nawawî** (may Allah have mercy on him) said, *"The preacher's standing on a pulpit is a unanimous act of the Sunnah."*[45]

For the preacher, there are some acts of the *Sunnah* concerning the Friday Sermon:

He may greet those present in the mosque when he ascends the pulpit. Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) ascended the pulpit, he used to give a salutation."*[46]

This *hadîth* is related by Ibn Mâjah and there are similar narrations of the same meaning.

The preacher may sit on the pulpit until the prayer caller (muezzin) finishes the prayer call (*adhân*). Abû Dâwûd records on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

> *"When the Prophet (PBUH) ascended the pulpit, he used to sit until the prayer caller finishes (the adhân). Then, he (the Prophet) would stand and deliver the sermon."*[47]

Among the acts of the *Sunnah* to be observed by the preacher is sitting between the two sermons, for the *hadîth* recorded on the authority of Ibn `Umar who said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to deliver two sermons while standing and sit in between them."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

In addition, the preacher can deliver the sermon while standing to follow the example of the Prophet (PBUH) as Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"...And left you standing..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Jumu`ah: 11) and Muslims acted according to this *Sunnah*.

Also, according to the *Sunnah*, the preacher may lean on a stick or the like.

Moreover, the preacher should look in front of him as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do. Turning right or left is regarded as ignoring the other side and contradicting the *Sunnah*. The Prophet (PBUH) used to look in front

of him while delivering Friday sermon and the worshippers (from among the Companions) also used to face him. At-Tirmidhî related, on the authority of Ibn Mas`ûd (may Allah be pleased with him), saying:

> *"When the Prophet (PBUH) stood on the pulpit, we used to face him."*

Furthermore, the preacher should make the sermon moderately brief for fear that the worshippers might become bored. However, he should not make it too brief to the extent that they might not benefit from it. Imâm Muslim records on the authority of `Ammâr Ibn Yâsir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"A man's prolongation of the prayer and shortening of the sermon are signs of his understanding (of faith). So prolong the prayer and shorten the sermon."*[48]

The preacher should raise his voice while delivering the sermon, for the Prophet (PBUH) used to raise his voice and his anger increased while delivering a sermon. This is more effective on the hearts of the listeners.

The language of the preacher should be clear, strong and effective, and phrases should be eloquent.

In addition to this, the preacher should invoke Allah to amend the religious and worldly conditions of Muslims. He should also invoke Allah to guide the Muslim ruler and those in authority and lead them to success. Invoking Allah during Friday sermon to lead to success those in authority was well known and always observed among Muslims, for it is observed by the Adherents of the *Sunnah* and Muslim community. However, it is the custom of the innovators in religion to leave this invocation (for those in authority).

Imâm Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said, *"If we had a supplication that was certain to be accepted, we would say it for the leader of the Muslims."* This is because if the leader of the Muslims is good, this will benefit all Muslims. However, this act of the *Sunnah* has so long been neglected that people consider it strange and think ill of the one who invokes Allah for those in authority.

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to pronounce an immediate prayer call immediately after the second sermon, and then start the prayer without a long interval.

The *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer unanimously consists of two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) and the *imâm* must raise his voice while reciting the Noble Qur'ân.

In the first *rak`ah*, it is an act of the *Sunnah* that the *imâm* recites the Sura of *Al-Jumu`ah* (*Friday*)[49] after reciting *Al-Fâtihah*, and in the second *rak`ah* he may recite the Sura of *Al-Munâfiqûn* (*the Hypocrites*)[50] after reciting *Al-Fâtihah* according to the *hadîth* Imâm Muslim related on the authority of Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him)[51]. The *imâm* also may recite the Sura of *Al-A`lâ* (*the Most High*)[52] in the first *rak`ah* and the Sura of *Al-Ghâshiyah* (*the Overwhelming Event*)[53] in the second *rak`ah*. It is also authentically narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) used to recite the Suras of *Al-Jumu`ah* and *Al-Munâfiqûn* in the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer and sometimes he (PBUH) recited the Sura of *Al-A`lâ* and the Sura of *Al-Ghâshiyah*[54].

The *imâm* should not divide one sura of the aforementioned between the two *rak`ahs* as this is contrary to the *Sunnah*. The apparent wisdom behind raising the voice while reciting the Noble Qur'ân in the *Jumu`ah* Prayer is that it is more evident and effective for achieving the desired objectives.

Endnotes

1 Abû Dâwûd (1047) [1/443], An-Nasâ'î (1373) [3/101], and Ibn Mâjah (1085) [2/8].
2 Al-Bukhârî (876) and Muslim (1975) [3/381].
3 Muslim (1979) [3/382].
4 Chapter No. 32 of the Qur'ân.
5 Chapter No. 76 of the Qur'ân.
6 Al-Bukhârî (891) [2/485] and Muslim (2031) [3/406].
7 See: *Zâdul-Ma`âd* (1/11).
8 See: *Zâdul-Ma`âd* (1/120).
9 Al-Bayhaqî (5994) [3/353], Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, An-Nasâ'î, and Ibn Mâjah
10 See: *Zâdul-Ma`âd* (1/425).
11 Al-Bukhârî (1052) [1/445], At-Tirmidhî (499) [2/373], An-Nasâ'î (1368) [2/97], Ibn Mâjah (1125) [2/26] and Muslim (1999) [3/391].
12 Ahmad (719) [1/93], `Abdur-Razzâq in his *Musannaf* (5420) [3/223].
13 Ahmad (2033) [1/230].
14 Chapter No. 18 of the Qur'ân.
15 Al-Hâkim (2125) [1/766]. See No. (2126) and No. (8627 and Al-Byhaqî (5996) [3/353].
16 Al-Bukhârî (935) [2/534] and Muslim (1967) [3/378].
17 Al-Bukhârî (883) [2/476].
18 See: `Abdur-Razzâq in his *'Musannaf'* [3/246] and Ibn Abû Shaybah [1/469].
19 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* (22/189-90).
20 Muslim (2033) [3/407].
21 Al-Bukhârî (1172) [3/65] and Muslim (1695) [3/252].
22 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* (22/193).
23 Al-Bukhârî (1166) [3/63] and Muslim (2019) [3/401].
24 Muslim (2021) [3/402].

25 Al-Bukhârî (930) [2/523] and Muslim (2015) [3/400].
26 This ruling applies to any talk that may be uttered during the sermon.
27 Ahmad (2033) [1/230].
28 Al-Bukhârî (934) [2/531] and Muslim (1962) [3/376].
29 Al-Bukhârî (930, 931) and Muslim (875/59).
30 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* (22/469, 470), (24/217, 218).
31 Muslim (1985) [3/385] and At-Tirmidhî (497) [2/371].
32 At-Tirmidhî (508) [2/383].
33 "The days of Allah": They refer here to the favors of Allah and the happenings that took place in the past.
34 Abû Dâwûd (1067) [1/449].
35 Ad-Dâraqutnî (1560) [2/3] and Al-Bayhaqî (5634) [3/261].
36 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* (24/166, 170).
37 See: Ibnul-Mundhir in *Al-Ijmâ`* (70, 71).
38 Al-Bayhaqî (5735) [3/287]; see also Al-Bukhârî (580) [2/76] and Muslim (1370) [3/106].
39 Al-Bukhârî (920) [2/920], Muslim (1991) [3/387], An-Nasâ'î (1415) [2/121] and Ibn Mâjah (1103) [2/18].
40 The Two Testifications of Faith: Saying, "I testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."
41 See: '*Zâdul-Ma`âd*' (1/523)
42 See: '*Al-Ikhtiyârât*' [pp. 120].
43 See the previous source.
44 Muslim (2002) [3/392].
45 See: *Al-Majmû`* [4/398].
46 Ibn Mâjah (1109) [2/20].
47 Abû Dâwûd (1092) [1/458].
48 Muslim (2009) [3/396].
49 Chapter No. 62 of the Qur'ân.
50 Chapter No. 63 of the Qur'ân.
51 Muslim (2023) [3/404].
52 Chapter No. 87 of the Qur'ân.
53 Chapter No. 88 of the Qur'ân.
54 Muslim (2025) [3/405].

Two Feasts (`*Îd*s) Prayer

The Prayer of the Two Feasts (`*Îd*s), namely the Fast-breaking Feast (`*Îdul-Fitr*) and the Feast of Sacrifice (`*Îdul-Adhâ*), is ordained by the Noble Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* and the consensus of Muslim scholars. Polytheists used to observe feasts at certain times and places. So, when Islam came, it invalidated such acts. In recompense, Islam ordained the Fast-breaking Feast and the Feast of Sacrifice as a means of showing thankfulness to Allah, Exalted be He, for the performance of those two great acts of worship, namely fasting during the month of Ramadân and performing *Hajj* to Al-Masjid Al-Harâm (the Sacred Mosque).

It is authentically narrated that when the Prophet (PBUH) came to Medina and there were two days that people used to celebrate, he (PBUH) said:

> *"Allah has given you instead of them what is better, they are: the Feast of Sacrifice and the Fast-breaking Feast."*[1]

Hence, it is not permissible to exceed these two feasts by inventing other feasts, such as birthdays and the like, as this is viewed as exceeding what is ordained by Allah. Moreover, such acts are viewed as *bid`ah* (a matter

innovated in religion), contradicting the Prophetic *Sunnah* and imitating the disbelievers. Such innovated feasts are not among the practices of Islam, whether they are called feasts, commemorations, days, weeks, years, etc., rather they are considered among the practices of the people of the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*) as well as an imitation of the foreign disbelieving nations and other nations. In this regard, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If any one imitates the manners of any people, then he is considered one of them."*[2]

In addition, he (PBUH) said:

> *"The best of speech is that of the Book of Allah, and the best of the guidance is the guidance given by Muhammad, and the most evil affairs are those innovated (in religion); and every innovation (in religion) is an error."*[3]

We ask Allah to let us see the right as right and guide us to follow it, and let us see the wrong as wrong and guide us to avoid it. Linguistically, the word *`Îd* (feast) in Arabic means repeating the act, and that it returns (every year) with joy and happiness. Moreover, Allah returns it with beneficence and favor on His servants as a reward for their performance of the two acts of worship: Fasting and *Hajj*.

The proof of the legality of observing the Feast (*`Îd*) Prayer is stated by Allah, Exalted be He, as He says:

> ***"So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone]."***
> (Qur'ân: Al-Kawthar: 2)

And He also says:

> ***"He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself - and mentions the Name of his Lord and prays."*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`lâ: 14-15)

The Prophet (PBUH) and his Caliphs used to observe it (Feast Prayer) regularly. Even women were commanded by the Prophet (PBUH) to attend it. So it is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) that women attend the Feast Prayer, but they are neither to be perfumed nor to wear adorned clothes that attract others' attention, as the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"They (women) must go while they are not perfumed."*

In addition, women should seclude themselves from the places of men. As for the menstruating women, the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"The menstruating women should keep away from the place of prayer."[4]

Umm `Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

"We were ordered to come out on the Day of Feast and even bring out the virgin girls from their houses and the menstruating women. They (menstruating women) would stand behind people and say takbîr (saying, "Allâhu-Akbar" i.e. "Allah is the Greatest") along with them, and invoke Allah along with them, and hope for the blessings of that day and for purification from sins."[5]

In this respect, coming out to perform the Feast Prayer in accordance with this manner, witnessed by everyone, is considered a means of showing and declaring the rituals of Islam. That is, these rituals are among the manifest signs of the religion.

The first Feast Prayer performed by the Prophet (PBUH) was in the second year after *Hijrah* (the Prophet's Immigration to Medina). The Prophet (PBUH) kept observing it until his death. Muslims also kept performing it, generation after generation. Thus, if it happened that people in any country abandoned performing Feast Prayer, the ruler should fight them, as it is among the manifest signs of Islam, similar to the prayer call (*adhân*).

The Feast Prayer should be performed at a spacious place near the town, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform the Prayer of the Two Feasts (`*Îds*) at the place located near the entrance of Medina. It is narrated by Abû Sa`îd that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) used to proceed to the place of prayer on the Day of Fast-breaking and the Day of Sacrifice (as related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[6]. Moreover, it is not reported that he (PBUH) performed the Feast Prayer at the mosque, except with an excuse. The reason behind performing it in a place outside the town is to show the strength of Muslims and Islam and to show and declare the rituals of the religion. Furthermore, this act (performing the Feast Prayer in a spacious place out of the town) does not involve hardship, as it does not take place except for two times in the year, unlike the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer. However, at Mecca, the Feast Prayer is to be performed at Al-Masjid Al-Harâm (the Sacred Mosque).

The due time of the Feast Prayer is when the sun rises to the length of a spear above the horizon, as it is the time at which the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform it. In addition, its due time extends until the meridian. However, when Muslims do not know about the time of the Feast until after the sun

has passed the meridian, they are to make up for it the next morning. That is because Abû `Umayr Ibn Anas reported on the authority of some of his uncles from the *Ansâr*[7] who said:

> *"The new moon of (the month of) Shawwâl was overcast so we observed fasting. By the end of the day, some people came to the Prophet (PBUH) and testified that they had sighted the new moon the previous day. He (the Prophet), therefore, commanded the people to break the fast and to go out to their place of prayer in the morning."*
>
> (Related by Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, and Ad-Dâraqutnî who deemed it *hasan* (good) *hadîth*)[8]

This *hadîth* is also viewed as *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* by a group of the memorizers among the scholars of *Hadîth*. Hence, if it were permissible to perform the Feast Prayer after the meridian, the Prophet (PBUH) would not delay it to the next morning. Another reason is that the Feast Prayer is to be performed in public congregation; therefore, there should be enough time to let people get ready for it.

It is considered an act of the *Sunnah* to perform the Prayer of the Feast of Sacrifice early and to delay that of the Fast-breaking Feast. With regard to this issue, Ash-Shâfi`î related a *mursal* (incompletely transmitted) *hadîth*,[9] that the Prophet (PBUH) sent to `Amr Ibn Hazm saying:

> *"Perform the prayer of the Day of Sacrifice early, delay that of the Day of Fast-breaking, and remind people (to mention Allah)."*[10]

That is to allow enough time to offer the sacrifice by performing the prayer of the Day of Sacrifice early; and to allow enough time to give *Zakâtul-Fitr*[11] before performing the Prayer of Fast-breaking.

Furthermore, it is regarded as an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to eat some dates before going out to perform the Prayer of Fast-breaking and not to eat on the Day of Sacrifice until one performs the prayer. In this respect, Buraydah narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used not to go out (for prayer) on the Day of Fast-breaking before eating, and he used not to eat on the Day of Sacrifice before performing (the Feast) Prayer."*[12]
>
> (Related by Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

Shaykh Taqiyyud-Dîn said:

> *"Allah ordained performing prayer before sacrificing in His statement, 'So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone].'*

(Qur'ân: Al-Kawthar: 2) *Allah also ordained giving the charity before performing prayer on the Day of Fast-breaking in His statement,* ***'He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself - and mentions the Name of his Lord and prays.'*** (Qur'ân: Al-A`lâ: 14-15) *Therefore, it becomes evident that the Sunnah is to give charity before performing the Prayer of Fast-breaking and to sacrifice after performing the Prayer on the Day of Sacrifice."*

In addition, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to go out early in the morning when proceeding to perform the Feast Prayer, so that one is able to be near the *imâm* (leader in prayer) and to get the reward of waiting for the Prayer, and so one's reward increases. Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah* for the Muslim to attend the Feast Prayer looking nice and wearing one's best clothes. In support of this, Jâbir said:

"The Prophet (PBUH) had a loose outer garment, which he used to wear on the Two Feasts and on Fridays."[13]

(Related in Sahîh *Ibn Khuzaymah (Ibn Khuzaymah's Authentic Book of Hadîth))*

Also, Ibn `Umar narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) used to wear his best clothes on the Two Feasts (as related by Al-Bayhaqî[14] with a good chain of transmitters).

Residence is a condition for the Feast Prayer. That is, those who intend to perform it must be settled in normal dwellings, as the case with the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer. In other words, the Feast Prayer is not to be established except whenever it is valid to establish the *Jumu`ah* Prayer. In support of this, it happened that the Feast came while the Prophet (PBUH) was performing *Hajj* and he did not perform it (the Feast Prayer) neither did his Caliphs.

The Feast Prayer is to be performed with two *rak`ahs* and to be performed before delivering the sermon. Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

"Allah's Messenger (PBUH), Abû Bakr, `Umar and `Uthmân used to perform the prayers of the Two Feasts before delivering the sermon."

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[15]

The *Sunnah* tackled this issue elaborately and most men of knowledge are of that view.

At-Tirmidhî said:

> *"According to the view of the men of knowledge among the Prophet's Companions and others, the prayers of the Two Feasts are to be performed before delivering the sermon."*

The wisdom behind delaying the delivery of the sermon after performing the Feast Prayer, unlike that of the *Jumu`ah* (which is delivered before the prayer) is that the *Jumu`ah* Sermon is a condition for the prayer; the condition is to precede the act which depends on it. This is not the case with the Feast sermon, as it is an act of the *Sunnah*.

According to Muslims' consensus, the Feast Prayer is to be performed in two *rak`ahs*. It is stated in the Two Sahîhs and other books of *Hadîth* that Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) performed a prayer of two rak`ahs (units of prayer) on the Day of Fast-breaking and he did not perform prayer before or after them."*[16]

In addition, `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The Prayer of the Fast-breaking Feast and that of the Feast of Sacrifice are to be performed in two rak`ahs, without shortening and this is said by the tongue of your Prophet (PBUH); and he has failed who invents (falsehood)."*
>
> (Related by Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth*)[17]

Neither prayer call (*adhân*) nor immediate prayer call (*iqâmah*) is ordained for the Feast Prayer. Imâm Muslim related that Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"I performed the Feast Prayer along with Allah's Messenger (PBUH) several times and he performed prayer before delivering the sermon, without pronouncing adhân or iqâmah."*[18]

When performing the Feast Prayer, one is to start with announcing *takbîr*[19] in the first *rak`ah* after the opening *takbîr* and invocation. Then, one is to announce six *takbîrs* before seeking refuge with Allah and reciting the Qur'ân. The opening *takbîr* is one of the integral parts of prayer that must be established (i.e. announced); prayer is not valid except with it. The other *takbîrs* are among the acts of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition). After the opening *takbir*, one is to say the opening invocation at the beginning of prayer, then say the six additional *takbîrs* and seek refuge with Allah, as seeking refuge with Allah precedes the recitation, and then one is to recite the Qur'ân.

In the second *rak`ah*, one is to say five *takbîrs*, before the recitation, other than that uttered when moving from the prostration position to the standing position. Imâm A<u>h</u>mad related on the authority of `Amr Ibn Shu`ayb, from his father, from his grandfather (`Abdullâh Ibn `Amr) who narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) pronounced takbîr in a Feast Prayer twelve times: seven times in the first rak`ah and five times in the second one"*[20]

This *<u>h</u>adîth* is related with a good chain of transmitters. Concerning the number of *takbîrs*, there are other narrations related from the Prophet (PBUH).

Imâm A<u>h</u>mad (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"The Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) disagreed concerning the number of takbîrs. All of their views are permissible."*

One is to raise the hand upon pronouncing every *takbîr*, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do so[21]. It is an act of the *Sunnah* to say between every two *takbîrs*:

> *"Allah is truly Great; and praise be to Allah in abundance; and glory be to Allah in the morning and the evening; and may Allah confer blessing upon the Prophet Mu<u>h</u>ammad and upon his household greatly."*

`Uqbah Ibn `Âmir said that he asked Ibn Mas`ûd about what one should say after the *takbîrs* of the Feast. Ibn Mas`ûd answered:

> *"One may praise Allah, extol Him and confer blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH)."*[22]

This *<u>h</u>adîth* is related by Al-Bayhaqî with his chain of transmitters on the authority of Ibn Mas`ûd, both in wording and action.

<u>H</u>udhayfah said concerning this *<u>h</u>adîth*, "*What Abû `Abdur-Ra<u>h</u>mân (Ibn Mas`ûd) said is true.*" If one says another invocation, there will be no harm, as there is no specific invocation to be mentioned.

Ibnul-Qayyim said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to keep silent for a little while between every two takbîrs. There is no specific invocation related from him to be uttered between every two takbîrs."*

With regard to the aforementioned issue, if the person is not certain about how many *takbîrs* he has uttered in his prayer, he is to depend on what he is

certain about, namely, the lesser number of *takbîrs*. Moreover, if the person forgets to pronounce the additional *takbîrs* and starts reciting the Qur'ân, they are to be overlooked, as they are only supererogatory acts and their due time has been missed. Furthermore, if the one led (in prayer) catches up with the *imâm* (leader in prayer) after the latter has started the recitation, one is not to say the additional *takbîrs*. Also, if one gets the *imâm* while he is in the bowing position, one is to say the opening *takbîr* and then bow without saying the additional *takbîrs*.

As mentioned before, the Feast Prayer consists of two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer), in which the *imâm* is to recite the Qur'ân aloud. In support of this view, Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to recite the Qur'ân aloud in the prayers of the Two Feasts and the Prayer for Rain."*
>
> (Related by Ad-Dâraqutnî)[23]

Scholars unanimously agree on this opinion. Moreover, it was followed by Muslim generations up till now and compiled by successors from their ancestors.

In the first *rak`ah*, one should recite, after *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*, the Sura of *Al-A`lâ* (*the Most High*)[24]. And in the second *rak`ah*, one should recite the Sura of *Al-Ghâshiyah* (*the Overwhelming Event*)[25]. This is based on the *hadîth* narrated by Samurah (may Allah be pleased with him) saying:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) used to recite in the prayers of the Two Feasts the Sura of Al-A`lâ and the Sura of Al-Ghâshiyah."*
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad)[26].

Furthermore, one may recite the Sura of *Qâf*[27] in the first *rak`ah*, and the Sura of *Al-Qamar* (*the Moon*)[28] in the second *rak`ah*. This came in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, the *Sunan*, and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) used to recite the Sura of *Qâf* and the Sura of *Al-Qamar* (in the Feast Prayer)[29].

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

> *"Whatever one may recite (in the Feast Prayer) is permissible, as is the case with other recitations in other prayers. However, if one recites the Sura of Qâf and the Sura of Al-Qamar or any other sura that came in the Prophetic traditions, it will be better. In great celebrations, the Prophet (PBUH) used to recite the suras that involve*

verses of monotheism, commands of Allah and things He prohibits, the Beginning of the Creation and the Hereafter. He (PBUH) also used to recite verses that contain the stories of the previous prophets with their nations and how Allah punished those who denied them. In addition to this, he used to recite the verses relating to those who believed their prophets and how Allah rewarded them with salvation and a better life."[30]

When the *imâm* says *taslîm*[31] (final salutation in prayer), he is to deliver two successive sermons, separating them by sitting for a while. In this respect, `Ubaydullâh Ibn `Ubaydullâh Ibn `Utbah related:

"It is among the acts of the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) that the imâm delivers two sermons in each of the Two Feasts and that he would separate them by sitting for a while."

(Related by Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î)[32]

Ibn Mâjah related on the authority of Jâbir that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) delivered the sermon while standing, then he sat for a while, and then he stood (again to complete delivering the sermon)[33]. It is also stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) commenced with prayer before delivering the sermon. He then stood up leaning on Bilâl, and he commanded (them) to fear Allah, and exhorted (them) to obey Him[34]. Imâm Muslim related a *hadîth* in which it is stated:

"...After finishing the prayer, the Prophet (PBUH) would stand in front of the people and the people would keep sitting in their rows."[35]

Moreover, when delivering the sermon on the Day of Fast-breaking, the *imâm* should exhort people to give in *Zakâh* pointing out its rulings, amount, when to give it and the type of things which can be given. Also, at the time of the Feast of Sacrifice, he should exhort people to offer sacrifices and explain to them the rulings on the sacrifice[36]. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) explained many of the rulings on sacrificial animals in the sermons he delivered on the Feast of Sacrifice. Similarly, preachers should focus, in their sermons, on (special) occasions, such as feasts, in order to explain to people the matters they need to know at the due time of such occasions. This should be after commanding people to fear Allah, preaching, and reminding them of Allah, especially in such great gatherings and sublime occasions. In addition, sermons should involve that which may benefit the listener, remind the unmindful and teach the ignorant. Moreover, women should attend the Feast Prayer,

as mentioned before, and a special sermon, embedded in the Feast sermon, should be directed to them. With regard to this, when the Prophet (PBUH) found that he could not make women hear his sermon because he was far from them, he went to them, and advised and ordered them to give charity[37]. Thus, women should have their share of the topic of the Feast sermon, as they need this and as this is considered a means of following the Prophet's tradition.

Among the relevant rulings on the Feast Prayer is that it is viewed detestable to perform supererogatory prayer before or after it in the place of prayer, until one leaves this place. This is based on the *hadîth* narrated by Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him), in which he said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) performed a prayer of two rak`ahs (units of prayer) on the Day of the Fast-breaking and he did not perform prayer before or after them."*[38]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Thus, the Feast Prayer has no supererogatory prayer to be performed before or after it.

Imâm Ahmad said, *"The people of Medina do not perform any supererogatory prayer, neither before nor after the Feast Prayer."* In addition, **Az-Zuhrî** said:

> *"I knew that none of our scholars mentions that any of the Salaf (early Muslim scholars) of this nation would perform any supererogatory prayer before or after the Feast Prayer. Ibn Mas`ûd and Hudhayfah used to forbid people from performing any prayer before it."*[39]

However, when one returns home, there will be no harm in performing any prayer there. In support of this view, Ahmad and other compilers of *Hadîth* related:

> *"After finishing the Feast Prayer, the Prophet (PBUH) used to perform two rak`ahs (units of prayer) on returning home."*[40]

It is an act of the *Sunnah* for the one who misses the Feast Prayer or part of it to make up for it according to its prescribed form and manner, namely to perform it as two *rak`ahs* with its additional *takbîrs*, that is because making up for it is similar to the actual performance. This is based on the generality of the Prophet's *hadîth*, in which he (PBUH) says:

> *"Pray whatever you get, and complete whatever you missed."*

For instance, if one misses one *rak`ah* with the *imâm* (leader in prayer), one is to complete prayer by performing another one. Moreover, if one comes

while the *imâm* is delivering the sermon, one is to sit and listen to it and when the *imâm* finishes the sermon, one may make up for the prayer, and there will be no harm whether one makes up for it alone or in congregation.

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to utter general *takbîr*, which is not limited in time. In this *takbîr*, men only are permitted to raise their voice loudly not women. Therefore, one is to pronounce *takbîr* in the two nights preceding the days of the Two Feasts as well as on the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...To complete the period and glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

Thus, *takbîr* is to be pronounced loudly in houses, markets, mosques and anywhere in which the Name of Allah, Exalted be He, can be pronounced. *Takbîr* also is to be pronounced loudly when one goes out to the place of prayer. In this regard, Ad-Dâraqutnî and other compilers of *Hadîth* related that whenever Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) went out to perform the Feast Prayer on the Day of Fast-breaking and the Day of Sacrifice, he used to pronounce *takbîr* aloud until he reaches the place of prayer, then he would pronounce *takbîr* until the *imâm* came[41]. It is recorded in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that Umm `Atiyyah said:

> *"We were commanded to make the menstruating women go out to witness the Feast Prayer..."*

And she added:

> *"...They (the menstruating women) would stand behind people and pronounce takbîr along with them."*

It is stated in another narration by Imâm Muslim as:

> *"...They (the menstruating women) used to pronounce takbîr along with people."*[42]

Hence, it is viewed desirable to pronounce *takbîr*, as it involves the declaration of the Islamic rituals.

Furthermore, the act of pronouncing *takbîr* on the Feast of Fast-breaking is more stressed upon than in the Feast of Sacrifice, as Allah, Exalted be He, says,

> ***"...To complete the period and glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

Consequently, *takbîr* is more stressed upon with regard to the Fast-breaking Feast, as it is enjoined by Allah.

In the Feast of Sacrifice, limited *takbîr* is ordained; namely, the *takbîr* which is said after every obligatory prayer performed in congregation. In such an act, the *imâm* is to face people, after uttering the final salutation in prayer, and utter *takbîr* along with them. Ad-Dâraqutnî, Ibn Abû Shaybah and other compilers of *Hadîth* related on the authority of Jâbir who said:

> *"When the Prophet (PBUH) performed the Subh (Morning) Prayer in the morning of `Arafah (the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah), he used to pronounce takbîr..."* [43]

In this case, one is to start pronouncing the *takbîr* immediately after prayers. As for the non-*muhrim* [44] person, the due time of the limited *takbîr* starts from the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer on the Day of `Arafah (Mount) until the afternoon of the last day of the Days of *Tashrîq* (days 11th, 12th, 13th of Dhul-Hijjah). Concerning the *muhrim*, the time of the limited *takbîr* starts from the *Zuhr* Prayer on the Day of Sacrifice until the `*Asr* (Afternoon) Prayer of the last day of the *Tashrîq* Days, as before that time a pilgrim should be busy pronouncing *talbiyah* [45]. In relation to this, Ad-Dâraqutnî relates from Jâbir saying:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to pronounce takbîr immediately after finishing obligatory prayers, starting from the Fajr Prayer on the Day of `Arafah until the `Asr Prayer on the last day of the Tashrîq Days."* [46]

In another narration, the words of this *hadîth* are:

> *"When he (the Prophet) finished Subh Prayer on the Day of `Arafah, he would face his Companions and say, 'Stay in your places.' Then he would say, 'Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest; there is no deity but Allah; Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, and (all) praise is due to Allah.'"* [47]

In this regard, Al.lah, Exalted be He, says, ***"And remember Allah during [specific] numbered days..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 203) The days mentioned in this verse refer to the Days of *Tashrîq*.

Imâm An-Nawawî commented, *"This opinion is the soundest opinion according to which Muslims act in all countries."*

In addition, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** said:

> *"The soundest opinion according to the majority of the Salaf and faqîhs, from the Prophet's Companions and scholars, is that the*

> *time of takbîr is to start from dawn of the day of `Arafah until the last day of the Tashrîq Days, and that it is to be after each prayer. It is stated in the Sunan that the Prophet (PBUH) said, ['The Day of `Arafah, and the Day of Sacrifice and the Days of Minâ (days 11th, 12th, 13th of Dhul-Hijjah) are our feast, we Muslims. These days are for eating and drinking (what is lawful) as well as the remembrance of Allah."* [48] *The reason behind starting the limited takbîr, for the muhrim, from the Zuhr Prayer on the Day of Sacrifice, is that pronouncing talbiyah should be stopped when throwing Jamratul-`Aqabah* [49]*. The time of Jamratul-`Aqabah stated in the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) is in the forenoon on the Day of Sacrifice. Therefore, the muhrim will be equal to the muhill (non-muhrim), so if he throws Jamratul-`Aqabah before dawn, he is not to start takbîr except after performing the Zuhr Prayer. This is according to the most prevailing opinion."* [50]

As for the manner according to which *takbîr* is to be performed, one is to say *"Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest; there is no deity but Allah; Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, and (all) praise is due to Allah."* There will be no harm in exchanging felicitation among people, saying, "May Allah accept good deeds from you and from us." In this regard, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said,** *"It was related that some of the Companions used to do such an act. Imâm Ahmad and others view such an act as legally permissible."* [51] The aim behind exchanging felicitation is to show affection and delight towards one's Muslim brothers. **Imâm Ahmad said,** *"I do not start giving this felicitation, but if a person felicitates me, I will answer him."* This is because answering greetings is a duty; however, starting felicitation is not an act of the *Sunnah* that a Muslim is commanded to do nor is it a forbidden one. Yet, there is no harm in a handshake. And Allah, Exalted be He, knows best.

Endnotes

1 Ahmad (11945) [3/103] and An-Nasâ'î (1555) [2/199].
2 Ahmad (5115) [2/68] and Abû Dâwûd (4031) [4/204].
3 Muslim (2002) [3/392].
4 Al-Bukhârî (324) [1/548] and Muslim (2051) [3/418].
5 Al-Bukhârî (971) [2/594] and Muslim (2053) [3/419].
6 Al-Bukhârî (956) [2/578] and Muslim (2050) [3/417].
7 The *Ansâr*: The Supporters; the inhabitants of Medina who had accepted Islam and supported the Prophet (PBUH) and all the *Muhâjirûn* (the Emigrants) upon their arrival there.

8 Abû Dâwûd (1157) [1/477], An-Nasâ'î (1556) [2/199], Ibn Mâjah (1653) [2/303] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (2183) [2/149].
9 *Mursal* (incompletely transmitted) *hadîth* is a *hadîth* whose chain of transmission lacks a Companion transmitter, i.e. a *hadîth* that a Successor of the Companions has directly attributed to the Prophet without mentioning a Companion.
10 `Abdur-Razzâq (5651) [3/286].
11 *Zakâtul-Fitr* (Fast-breaking *Zakâh*): An obligatory charity to be paid by the rich to the poor. In a juristic view, it is to be paid at any time throughout Ramadân, whereas it is most preferable to give it two or three days right before the Fast-breaking Feast (*`Îdul-Fitr*). A third view maintains that it is to be given before going out for performing the Prayer of the Fast-breaking Feast.
12 Ahmad [5/352], Ibn Mâjah (1756), At-Tirmidhî (542) and Ibn Khuzaymah (1426).
13 Ibn Khuzaymah (1766) [3/132].
14 Al-Bayhaqî (6143) [3/398].
15 Al-Bukhârî (963) [2/584] and Muslim (2049) [3/416].
16 Al-Bukhârî (964) [2/584] and Muslim (2054) [3/420].
17 Ahmad (257) [1/37], An-Nasâ'î (1419) [3/123]/(1565) [3/203] and Ibn Mâjah (1063, 1064) [1/556, 557].
18 Muslim (2045) [3/414]. See also Muslim (2048) [3/416].
19 *Takbîr*: Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
20 Ahmad (6688) [2/180], Abû Dâwûd (1151) [1/475], Ibn Mâjah (1278) [2/102] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (1712) [2/36].
21 Al-Bayhaqî (3/293).
22 Al-Bayhaqî (6186) [3/410].
23 Ad-Dâraqutnî (1785) [2/54].
24 Chapter No. 87 of the Qur'ân.
25 Chapter No. 88 of the Qur'ân.
26 Ahmad (20093) [5/19], Abû Dâwûd (1125) [1/468] and An-Nasâ'î (1421) [3/124]. Ahmad (18343) [4/369]/(18390) [4/376] and Ibn Mâjah (1283) [2/104]. Muslim (2025) [3/405].
27 Chapter No. 50 of the Qur'ân.
28 Chapter No. 54 of the Qur'ân.
29 Muslim (2056) [3/421], Abû Dâwûd (1154) [1/476], At-Tirmidhî (533) [415], An-Nasâ'î (1566) [2/204] and Ibn Mâjah (1282) [2/103].
30 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* (24/205, 219).
31 *Taslîm*: Saying the final *Salâms* in prayer (saying, "*As-salâmu `alaykum wa Rahmatullâh*" i.e. "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah") when concluding prayer.
32 Al-Bayhaqî (6213) [3/420].
33 Ibn Mâjah (1289) [2/106], Abû Dâwûd (1093) [1/458], An-Nasâ'î (1416) [2/122]; see also Muslim (1993) [3/388]. Al-Bukhârî (920) [2/515] and Muslim (1991) [3/387].
34 Muslim (2045) [3/414].
35 Muslim (2050) [3/417].
36 Al-Bukhârî (965, 985) [2/584, 680] and Muslim (5049, 5038) [7/117, 112].
37 Al-Bukhârî (1449) [3/393] and Muslim (2042) [3/413].
38 Al-Bukhârî (964) and Muslim (884).
39 `Abdur-Razzâq (5606) [3/273].

40 Ibn Mâjah (1293) [2/108], A<u>h</u>mad [3/28, 40] and Ibn Khuzaymah (1469).
41 Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1700) [2/34] and Al-<u>H</u>âkim (1147) [1/298].
42 Muslim (2052) [3/419].
43 Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1719) [2/37] and Al-<u>H</u>âkim (1152) [1/299].
44 *Mu<u>h</u>rim*: One in a state of ritual consecration during *<u>H</u>ajj* or *'Umrah*.
45 *Talbiyah*: A formula recited by a pilgrim during *<u>H</u>ajj* or *'Umrah* after assuming the state of *i<u>h</u>râm*; a pilgrim says: "Here I am at Your service, O Allah, here I am at Your service. Here I am at Your service, You have no partner, here I am at Your service. Verily, all praise, blessings, and dominion are Yours. You have no partner."
46 Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1719) [2/37].
47 Ad-Dâraqu<u>t</u>nî (1721) [2/38].
48 Abû Dâwûd (2419) [2/558], At-Tirmidhî (772) [3/143] and Muslim (1142).
49 *Jamratul-'Aqabah*: A small stone-made pillar in a walled place. There are three *jamrahs* situated in Minâ. The closest one to Mecca is known as *Jamratul-'Aqabah*; it is also called the Great *Jamrah* and the Last *Jamrah*.
50 See: "*Majmû'ul-Fatâwâ*" (20/364), (24/220).
51 See: "*Majmû'ul-Fatâwâ*" (24/253).

Eclipse Prayer

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases - that you may know the number of years and account [of time]. Allah has not created this except in truth. He details the signs for a people who know."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Yûnus: 5)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"And of His signs are the night and day and the sun and moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or to the moon, but prostrate to Allah, Who created them, if it should be Him that you worship."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Fussilat: 37)

The Eclipse Prayer is a stressed act of the *Sunnah* according to the unanimous agreement of scholars. Its proof is derived from the confirmed act of the *Sunnah* of Allah's Messenger (PBUH). Eclipse is a sign amongst the signs of Allah, which He reveals to warn and alarm His servants, as He, Exalted be He, says:

"...And We send not the signs except as a warning."

(Qur'ân: Al-Isrâ': 59)

There was an eclipse in the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) and so he hurried to the mosque filled with fear and dragging his garment out of haste. He led Muslims in prayer and told them that the eclipse is a sign amongst the signs of Allah by which He warns His servants. He also told them that it might be the reason for a severe torment that might befall people. Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) ordered people to do acts that may eliminate it. That is, to perform prayer, supplicate, ask for Allah's forgiveness, give charity, emancipate (slaves), and other good deeds, so that people may be relieved.

Eclipses are considered a kind of warning from Allah directed to people in order to make them turn to Allah in repentance and follow His right path. In the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*), people used to believe that the reason behind eclipses was due to the birth or death of a great person. Therefore, the Messenger (PBUH) invalidated such beliefs and showed the Divine wisdom behind eclipses. Al-Bukhârî and Muslim related a *hadîth* narrated by Abû Mas`ûd Al-Ansârî who said:

"There was an eclipse on the day when Ibrâhîm, the son of the Prophet (PBUH), died, and so people said that the sun had eclipsed due to the death of Ibrâhîm. Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) said, 'The sun and the moon are two signs amongst the signs of Allah, so they do not eclipse because of the death or life of somebody. So, when you see that, seek refuge with the remembrance of Allah and perform prayer.'"[1]

There is another *hadîth* stated in the Two *Sahîhs* in which the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"Invoke Allah and perform prayer until the eclipse clears."[2]

There is also a similar *hadîth* related in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* on the authority of Abû Mûsâ, saying:

"These signs, which Allah sends, do not occur because of the death or birth of somebody, but by them Allah warns His servants. So when you see anything thereof, resort to remembering Allah, invoking Him and asking for His forgiveness."[3]

Hence, Allah, Exalted be He, causes eclipses of these two great signs, namely the sun and moon, to let people take warning and know that the sun

and moon are creatures, just like the other creatures, that may be afflicted with imperfection and change. Thus, Allah does this to show His servants His sublime, perfect Might and to confirm that He is the Only One deserving worship. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And of His signs are the night and day and the sun and moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or to the moon, but prostrate to Allah, Who created them, if it should be Him that you worship."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Fussilat: 37)

As for the time of the Eclipse Prayer, it is to start from the beginning of the eclipse until it is clear, as the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"When you see the eclipse, perform prayer."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[4]

It came in another *hadîth* related by Muslim as:

> *"When you see any of this (i.e. eclipse), perform prayer until it clears."*[5]

The Eclipse Prayer is not to be performed after the eclipse is over, for its due time has been missed. Also, if the eclipse is over before people know of it, they are not to perform the Eclipse Prayer.

According to the soundest opinion of scholars, Eclipse Prayer is to be performed with two *rak`ahs* (units of Prayer), in which one is to recite the Qur'ân aloud. As for the first *rak`ah*, one is to recite *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)* and another long sura, such as the Sura of *Al-Baqarah (the Cow)*[6] or any other long sura. Then, one is to perform a prolonged bowing, and raise one's head and say *tasmî`*[7] and *tahmîd*[8] in the same way one does in other prayers. After that, one is to recite *Al-Fâtihah* and another long sura, but shorter than the first, such as the Sura of *Âlu `Imrân* (*the Family of `Imrân*)[9]. Next, one is to perform a long bowing, but shorter than the first one, and raise one's head and say:

> *"Allah listens to the one who praises Him, O our Lord! (All) praise is due to You, many good and blessed praises, (the praise) with which is filled the heavens and the earth, and with which is filled anything that You desire after this."*

After saying so, one is to perform two prolonged prostrations and not to prolong sitting between them. Then, one is to perform the second *rak`ah*

similar to the first, namely with two prolonged bowings and two prolonged prostrations. Finally, one is to recite *Tashahhud* and say *taslîm*[10].

This is how the Eclipse Prayer is to be performed, according to the way practiced by Allah's Messenger (PBUH), and according to what was reported about him through many ways of transmission. Some of these ways of transmission are included in the Two Sahîhs; for example, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"In the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (PBUH), the sun eclipsed and he went to the mosque and the people aligned behind him. He pronounced takbîr*[11] *and prolonged the recitation (of the Qur'ân) and then said takbîr and performed a prolonged bowing; then he (lifted his head and) said, 'Allah listens to the one who praises Him.' He then did not prostrate but stood up and recited a prolonged recitation, but shorter than the first one. He again pronounced takbîr, then performed a prolonged bowing, but shorter than the first one and then said (after rising from bowing), 'Allah listens to the one who praises Him, O our Lord! (All) praise is due to You.' Then, he prostrated and then he did the same in the second rak`ah; thus he completed four bowings and four prostrations. The sun (eclipse) had cleared before he finished the prayer."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[12]

It is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to perform Eclipse Prayer in congregation, as done by the Prophet (PBUH), yet it is permissible to perform it alone, like the case with the other supererogatory prayers. However, it is preferable to perform it in congregation. Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah*, for the *imâm*, to preach people after performing the Eclipse Prayer, and warn them against heedlessness with regard to Allah's commands, and against unawareness. The *imâm* should also command them to invoke Allah frequently and ask for His forgiveness.

In the Two Sahîhs, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) came to the people, after the sun became visible again after the eclipse, and delivered a sermon, in which he praised Allah and extolled Him. Then he said, 'The sun and the moon are two signs amongst the signs of Allah; they do not eclipse on the death or birth of anyone. So when you see the eclipse, invoke Allah, pronounce takbîr, perform prayer and give charity...' "*[13]

If the prayer is finished before the eclipse is over, one is to resort to remembering and invoking Allah until it is over, and not to repeat prayer. However, if the eclipse is clear during prayer, one is to complete it lightly and not to finish it straight away, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And do not invalidate your deeds."

(Qur'ân: Muhammad: 33)

Hence, prayer is to be during the time of eclipse, as the Prophet (PBUH) says, "*...until the eclipse is clear,*" and, "*...until the eclipse is over.*"[14]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah said:

"The time of the eclipse may be long at times, and short at others. This is according to (the amount of) the part eclipsed of the sun; the sun may be entirely or partially eclipsed. Thus, if the eclipse takes a long time, one is to prolong prayer and recite the Sura of Al-Baqarah (the Cow), or any other long sura, in the first rak'ah. After performing the second bowing, one is to recite a sura shorter than the first. There are sahîh (authentic) hadîths narrated about the Prophet (PBUH) in support of what we have already mentioned. Moreover, the prayer is to be completed lightly when the reason behind performing it is over (i.e. when the eclipse is over). Similarly, one is permitted to lighten the prayer when one knows that the eclipse will not take a long time. In addition, if the eclipse begins to be clear before one commences prayer, one is to commence it and make it light. The majority of scholars uniformly agree upon this, for the Eclipse Prayer is ordained for a specific reason, which is about to finish. If the eclipse clears entirely before the commencement of prayer, one is not to perform it."[15]

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (1041, 1057, 3204) and Muslim (911).
2 Al-Bukhârî (1060) [2/705] and Muslim (2119) [2/457].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1059) [2/704] and Muslim (912).
4 Al-Bukhârî (1043) [2/679] and Muslim (2119) [3/457].
5 Muslim (2099) [3/447]
6 Chapter No. 2 of the Qur'ân.

7 *Tasmî`*: Saying "*Sami`allâhu liman hamidah*" i.e. "Allah listens to the one who praises Him," when standing following bowing in prayer.

8 *Tahmîd* (in prayer): Saying as a reply to *tasmî`*, "*Rabbanâ-walakal-hamd*" i.e. "Our Lord, to You be (all) praise."

9 Chapter No. 3 of the Qur'ân.

10 *Taslîm*: Saying the final *Salâms* in prayer (saying, *"As-salâmu `alaykum wa Rahmatullâh" i.e. "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah")* when concluding prayer.

11 *Takbîr*: Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).

12 Al-Bukhârî (1046) [2/688] and Muslim (2088) [3/440].

13 Al-Bukhârî (1044) [2/682] and Muslim (2086) [3/438].

14 Al-Bukhârî (1063) [2/706]. Al-Bukhârî (1041) [2/678] and Muslim (2111) [3/453].

15 See: "*Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ*" [24/260].

Rain Prayer

This prayer is a means of seeking rain from Allah, Exalted be He, during times of drought. That is, people are naturally disposed to ask help from the One Who is able to support them; Allah Alone. This prayer was known among the previous nations. It is regarded also as one of the acts of the prophets (peace be upon them all), as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 60)

Similarly, the Seal of Prophets, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) performed Prayer for Rain for his people many times, and in many ways. In addition, Muslim scholars unanimously agree on the legality of such an act.

The Prayer for Rain is ordained during times of drought and times when rain fails, which causes harm to people. Then there is no way out except by supplicating their Lord and asking Him for water (rain). People may supplicate Allah in various ways. For instance, people may supplicate Allah in Prayer, whether in congregation or alone. They may also supplicate Him by invoking Him during

the sermon of the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) Prayer, in which the *imâm* may invoke Allah, and Muslims say, "*Âmîn* (*Amen*)." Furthermore, it may be by invoking Allah after performing prayers, or by supplicating Him in seclusions with neither prayer nor sermon. All such acts are related about the Prophet (PBUH).

The Prayer for Rain is regarded as a stressed *Sunnah*, as `Abdullâh Ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) went out to invoke Allah for rain. He faced the qiblah,*[1] *invoking Allah. Then he traversed his cloak and performed two rak`ahs and recited the Qur'ân aloud in them."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[2]

There are many *hadîth*s in support of this practice.

The Prayer for Rain is similar to that of the Feast concerning its relevant rulings and the place where it is performed. That is, it is viewed desirable to perform it in the place where the Feast (`*Îd*) Prayer is performed; outside the mosque. Moreover, its rulings and practices are the same as those of the Feast Prayer, namely the number of *rak`ah*s, the loud recitation of the Qur'ân, being performed before delivering the sermon, and the additional *takbîr*s in the first and second *rak`ah*s before the recitation of the Qur'ân, as illustrated before.

Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) performed two rak`ahs as he does in the Feast (Prayer)."*

At-Tirmidhî says that this is a *hasan* (good) and *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth*, and Al-Hâkim and others[3] view it as a *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth*, as well. The one performing the Prayer for Rain is to recite the Sura of *Al-A`lâ* (*the Most High*)[4] in the first *rak`ah*, and the Sura of *Al-Ghâshiyah* (*the Overwhelming Event*)[5] in the second one. People are to perform it in a vast spacious place, away from the place of residence, as the Prophet (PBUH) did not perform it except in the desert. This is because performing it in such a place is a means of showing much need to Allah, Exalted be He. When the *imâm* wants to proceed to perform the Prayer for Rain, he should start with reminding people of what may soften their hearts by mentioning Allah's reward and punishment. They should also be commanded to turn to Allah in repentance and return rights to whom they are due. This is because sins are amongst the main reasons that cause rain and blessings to be withheld. On the other side, repentance and asking Allah for forgiveness are reasons for Allah's answering of supplication. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened [i.e. bestowed] upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied [the messengers], so We seized them for what they were earning."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-A`râf: 96)

Furthermore, the *imâm* should command people to give charity to the poor and needy, as this is regarded as a cause for sending Allah's mercy. After that, he is to set for them a certain day, at which they are to come out and be prepared for such an honorable occasion, and according to that which best suits it as an act of the *Sunnah*. At that date, people are to go out to the place of prayer showing humbleness, submissiveness and neediness of Allah, Exalted be He, as Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) went out to perform the Prayer for Rain showing humility, humbleness, and submissiveness, and supplicating (Allah)."*
>
> (At-Tirmidhî said that this is a *hasan*, *sahîh* (good, authentic) *hadîth*.)

No Muslim should stay behind (from going out) while able, even boys and women, whose presence does not cause temptation, are to go out to perform it. Then, the *imâm* is to lead people performing two *rak`ah*s, as mentioned before. After doing so, he is to deliver one sermon. However, some scholars view that the *imâm* is to deliver two sermons. Both opinions are permissible, but the soundest opinion is to deliver one sermon, according to the most preponderant legal proof. In most cases, the Prophet (PBUH) delivered the sermon after performing the Prayer for Rain, and Muslims acted according to this. However, it is related that the Prophet (PBUH) delivered the sermon before performing the prayer[6]. This is the view of some scholars, but the first view (delivering the sermon after performing prayer) is more preponderant; and Allah knows best.

In the sermon of asking for rain, the *imâm* should ask for Allah's forgiveness as well as recite the verses that command asking for forgiveness, in abundance, as this is considered a cause for sending rain. Moreover, the *imâm* should supplicate Allah, Exalted be He, with much invocation, asking for rain. When supplicating Allah, the *imâm* should raise his hands, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to raise his hands when invoking Allah in the Prayer for Rain, so much that the whiteness of his armpits became visible[7]. The *imâm* should also confer

blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH), as this is a cause for (Allah) answering his supplication. He may invoke Allah with the supplication related about the Prophet (PBUH) in such situations,[8] as a means of following him. In this regard, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 21)

It is viewed as an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to face the *qiblah* (direction of prayer) at the end of supplication, and to traverse one's clothes, as related in the Two *Sahîhs*[9] that the Prophet turned his back toward the people and faced the *qiblah* asking Allah (for rain). Then he traversed his cloak[10]. The wisdom behind this - Allah knows best – is that it is like a good omen that the present hard condition may turn into prosperity and the sending of rain. People should also follow the *imâm* and traverse their clothes, as Imâm Ahmad related, *"...the people followed him (the Prophet) and traversed their clothes."*[11] In addition, what is stated as done by the Prophet (PBUH) is to be done by his nation, unless it is proved that he alone is particularized with such a thing.

This would be until Allah sends down rain; otherwise, Muslims should repeat asking for rain, as long as there is a need for that. It is considered an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) that when rain starts to fall, one is to stand and receive some of it[12] and say, *"O Allah! Let it be a strong fruitful rain,"*[13] and say, *"The rain is due to the Favor and Mercy of Allah."*[14] However, when rain falls heavily and there is fear that it might cause harm, one should say as the Prophet (PBUH) used to say:

> *"O Allah! (Let the rain be) around us, not on us. O Allah! (Let the rain be) on the plateaus, on the mountains, on the hills, on the hillocks, in the valleys, and on the places where trees grow."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Allah knows best.

Endnotes

1 The *qiblah*: The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka'bah.
2 Al-Bukhârî (1024) [2/663] and Muslim (2067) [3/427].
3 Abû Dâwûd (1165) [1/480], At-Tirmidhî (558) [2/445], An-Nasâ'î (1505) [2/173], Ibn Mâjah (1266) [2/94], and Al-Hâkim in his "*Al-Mustadrak*" (1220) [1/466].

4 Chapter No. 87 of the Qur'ân.
5 Chapter No. 88 of the Qur'ân.
6 Al-Bukhârî (1024) [2/663] and Muslim (2068) [3/428]; see also Al-Bayhaqî in his "*Sunan*" [3/486].
7 Al-Bukhârî (1031) [2/667] and Muslim (2074) [3/430].
8 Al-Bukhârî (1013) [2/646] and Muslim (2075) [3/431].
9 The Two Sahîhs: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
10 Al-Bukhârî (1025) and Muslim (894).
11 Ahmad (16417) [4/41].
12 Muslim (2080) [3/435].
13 Al-Bukhârî (1032) [2/668].
14 Al-Bukhârî (810) [2/673] and Muslim (228) [1/247].

Death and Burial

Our *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law), thank Allah, is so perfect and comprehensive that it covers all man's affairs related to his life as well as his death. Among the issues that our *Sharî'ah* covers are the rulings on deathbed and death, starting from one's last illness and death, until one's burial. Our *Sharî'ah* also covers the rulings on visiting a dying person and instructing him to say, *"There is no deity but Allah,"* washing the body of the deceased, enshrouding his body, performing the Funeral Prayer over him, burying him, settling his debts, carrying out his will, distributing his properties legally, and assuming guardianship over his young children.

Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"The Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) regarding sick and dying people is the most perfect one, which is different from that of all other nations. The Sunnah in this regard includes the following:*

- Showing servitude and submissiveness to Allah, Exalted be He, as perfectly as possible.

- Giving the dying and deceased person the kindest treatment, that benefits him in his grave and on the day when he is resurrected. Such a kind treatment includes many acts, such as visiting the dying person, instructing him to utter "There is no deity but Allah" before breathing his last. Kind treatment also includes purifying the deceased by washing his body and preparing him for meeting Allah, Exalted be He, in his best form and state, standing in rows while performing the Funeral Prayer over him, praising Allah and extolling Him while praying over the deceased, and asking Allah to confer His blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH) to forgive the deceased, to have mercy upon him and pardon his sins. Among the acts of the Sunnah is standing on the side of the deceased person's grave asking steadfastness for him (when questioned by the Two Angels), visiting his grave, invoking Allah for him, being good to his family and relatives, and so on."[1]

It is worth mentioning that it is an act of the *Sunnah* to mention death frequently and prepare oneself for it through repentance and contrition, returning the (unlawfully acquired) rights to their rightful owners, and hastening to do good deeds lest one dies unexpectedly. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Mention the pleasure destroyer (i.e. death) frequently."*
>
> (Related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth*[2] with authentic chains of transmitters, and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* by Ibn Hibbân, Al-Hâkim, and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

Moreover, At-Tirmidhî and other compilers of *Hadîth* related on the authority of Ibn Mas`ûd the following *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, 'Show due bashfulness to Allah.' We (the Companions) said, 'O Messenger of Allah! We show bashfulness, thank Allah.' He (PBUH) said, 'It is not that (as you think). True bashfulness to Allah is to keep the head and what it contains (i.e. to keep the eyes, ears, tongue, etc., away from sins) and to keep the abdomen (away from unlawful food) and what is related to it (i.e. to keep the private parts and the legs, etc., away from committing what is prohibited), and to remember death and decay (in grave); and whoever seeks the Hereafter should abandon the adornments of the worldly life. Whoever does so will be the one showing due bashfulness to Allah.' "*[3]

Firstly: Rulings on Sickness and Dying

When one is afflicted with an illness, one should bear it patiently hoping for divine reward and should not be impatient or discontented with fate and Divine Decree. Yet, one is allowed to tell others about one's illness and its kind, provided one is satisfied with Allah's predestination. Also, complaining of one's illness to Allah and asking Him for recovery does by no means contradict patience; on the contrary, it is desirable and highly recommended in Islam to complain (to Allah) and ask Him for recovery. Prophet Ayyûb (Job; PBUH), for example, called to his Lord, as revealed by Allah in the Qur'ân, saying:

> ***"Indeed, adversity has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Anbiyâ': 83)

Moreover, there is no harm in receiving lawful medical treatment; some scholars strongly recommend resorting to lawful medication to the degree that it seems to be obligatory. This is because there are many *hadîths* stressing adopting reasonable means to reach an end and seeking medical treatment when necessary, for this does not contradict one's reliance on Allah and trust in Him. It is just like satisfying hunger and thirst by means of food and drink.

Yet, it is not permissible to use prohibited things for medical treatment according to what is related in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that Ibn Mas`ûd (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"Allah has never made your remedy in what He has prohibited for you."*[4]

Besides, Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth* related the following *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* on the authority of Abû Hurayrah:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'Allah has sent down both disease and cure, and He has appointed a cure for every disease, so treat yourselves medically, but use nothing prohibited.' "*[5]

In addition, it is stated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that when the Prophet (PBUH) was asked about using an intoxicant as remedy, he replied, *"It is not a remedy; it is a malady."*[6]

Likewise, it is prohibited to use whatever might affect the correctness of one's creed, as a remedy, such as wearing amulets containing polytheistic words, superstitious names, nonsensical writings, and the like. It is also prohibited to wear beads, strings, earrings, or pendants on one's arm, upper arm, or elsewhere, believing that they are means of protection against the evil

eye and affliction. The idea behind prohibiting such things is that one's heart would be attached to them instead of Allah, seeking their aid and protection against harm, which is a kind of polytheism or one of its causing factors. The same prohibition applies to seeking a remedy through resorting to sorcerers, witchdoctors, shamans, clairvoyants, and those employing the jinn, as a Muslim's creed is more important to him than his health.

Allah, Exalted be He, has appointed lawful means of remedy which are useful to one's body, mind and creed, the first of which are the Glorious Qur'ân, the legal Qur'anic incantations, and the legal invocations. **Ibnul-Qayyim** said:

> *"The best of remedy is performing good deeds, remembering Allah, supplicating and imploring Him, and turning to Him in repentance, the effects of which are much greater than medicine. Yet, their effects depend on how much one returns to Allah and Allah's acceptance of one's supplication."*

There is no harm in receiving medical treatment, at hospitals or elsewhere, at the hands of qualified doctors who know how to diagnose diseases and treat them.

It is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to visit the sick and the dying, for the Prophet (PBUH), as stated in the Two Sahîhs, stressed that there are five duties of every Muslim toward his fellow Muslim, among which is visiting him when sick[7]. When one visits a sick person, one should ask him about his health, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to come close to the sick person he visited and ask him about his health.

One should visit the sick person every two or three days, unless the sick person wants one to visit him daily. On the other hand, one should not stay long with the sick person unless it is his will. When visiting the sick person, one should say to him, *"Do not worry, it (your illness) is a means of purification (from your sins), if Allah wills."*[8] He should also try to make him happy, invoke Allah to cure him, and recite legal Qur'anic incantations for him, particularly the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*, the Sura of *Al-Ikhlâs* (*Sincerity of Faith*),[9] and *Al-Mu'awwidhatân*, namely the Suras of *Al-Falaq* (*Daybreak*)[10] and *An-Nâs* (*Mankind*)[11].

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* for the sick person to bequeath some of his money to be given in charity. He should also determine in his will how his money should be divided; the bequests to be fulfilled, the debts to be settled, the deposits and trusts to be returned to their owners. Even healthy people should do the same and write their wills beforehand, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"It is not permissible for any Muslim who has something to declare in testimony to stay for two nights without having his (last) will written and kept ready with him."

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[12]

"Two nights" in the above *hadîth* is not meant literally, but it refers to any short period of time. That is to say, it is impermissible for a Muslim, who has something to write down in a will, to stay – even for a short period of time - without having his will written and kept ready with him, for one does not know when death may overtake him.

A sick person must think highly of Allah, and be confident of His mercy, as Allah says in a *Qudsî* (Divine) *hadîth*[13]:

"I am just as My servant thinks of Me, (i.e. I am Able to do for him what he thinks I can do for him)."[14]

That must be the feeling of every Muslim, especially at death's door, when he is about to meet his Lord.

It is an act of the *Sunnah* for visitors to make the dying person desirous of Allah's mercy rather than being afraid of His punishment, for he may become desperate. However, when one is healthy, one should be both desirous of Allah's mercy and afraid of His punishment. Both hope and fear are needed for the healthy because being just overcome by fear of Allah's punishment makes one give up hope (in Allah's Mercy). On the other hand, being overwhelmed by hope in Allah's Mercy, without fearing His punishment, makes one feel secure from Allah, and thus feel no remorse.

When the dying person is breathing his last, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to exhort him to say, *"There is no deity but Allah,"* for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Exhort the dying among you to say, 'There is no deity but Allah.'"

(Related by Imâm Muslim)[15]

The idea behind that is to make *"there is no deity but Allah"* his last words; in a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*, Mu`âdh Ibn Jabal narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Whoever his last words are 'there is no deity but Allah' will enter paradise."[16]

It is important to bear in mind that instructing the dying person to say so should be done gently so as not to annoy or exhaust him while he is breathing his last.

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to make the dying person face the *qiblah* (direction of prayer), and to recite the Sura of *Yâ Sîn*[17] over him, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Recite the Sura of Yâ Sîn over those dying among you."*
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and Ibn Mâjah,[18] and deemed <u>sa*h*î*h*</u> (authentic) by Ibn <u>H</u>ibbân)

It is worth mentioning that the Qur'ân is to be recited over the dying, not the dead, as the latter case is *bid'ah* (a matter innovated in religion) whereas the former case is an act of the *Sunnah*. Accordingly, reciting the Qur'ân at funerals or graves over the dead is among the innovated acts in religion that have never been revealed or permitted by Allah. Therefore, Muslims should stick to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (PBUH) and give up such innovated acts in religion.

Secondly: Rulings on the Deceased

Once a person dies, it is desirable for the attendant one to close his (the deceased) eyes, for the Prophet (PBUH) did the same to Abû Salamah when he died, and said:

> *"When the soul is taken away, the sight follows it. So, do not pray for anything but good (in the presence of a dying person), for the angels say 'Amen' to what you say."*
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)[19]

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to cover the body of the deceased immediately after his death with a garment, for 'Ã'ishah (the Prophet's wife, may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"When the Prophet (PBUH) died, he was covered with a decorated garment made of linen (or cotton)."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[20]

Muslims should hasten in preparing the corpse of the deceased for burial when they are certain about his death, for the Prophet said:

> *"The corpse of a Muslim should not remain withheld among his family (without being buried)."*
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)[21]

Moreover, hastening in burying the deceased is intended to avoid waiting until the corpse changes (emitting odor). **Imâm A<u>h</u>mad Ibn <u>H</u>anbal** said,

"A sign of honor to the deceased is to hasten his burial." Yet, there is no harm in waiting until the coming of the deceased's guardian or anyone else (whose presence is necessary) provided he is near and there is no fear that the corpse of the deceased might undergo change.

Besides, it is permissible to announce the death of a Muslim for the purpose of gathering people to prepare him for burial, attend his funeral, perform the Funeral Prayer over him, and pray to Allah for him. Yet, announcing someone's death by wailing and lamentation, as well as enumerating his good qualities, is a misbehavior belonging to the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*); the same goes for funeral orations and funeral ceremonies.

It is desirable to hasten in carrying out the dead person's will; Allah, Exalted be He, has called for carrying out the deceased's will prior to settling his debts, enjoining people to take an interest in writing wills and carrying them out.

The debts of the deceased should be settled as fast as possible, whether they are due to Allah or to people. The debts due to Allah include unpaid *Zakâh*, unperformed *Hajj*, unfulfilled vows of worship, and unfulfilled expiation. However, those due to people include trusts, ill-gotten things or gains, loans and borrowed things, arrears, and the like. Such debts are to be settled on behalf of the deceased, whether stated in his will or not. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The soul of a (dead) believer is suspended to his debt until it (the debt) is settled."*
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad and At-Tirmidhî; the latter deems it a *hasan* (good) *hadîth*)[22]

Thus, the deceased person's soul is asked to pay off his debt and is suspended until the debt is settled. Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) urges us to hasten in settling the debt of the deceased; this is when the money left by the deceased is enough to settle his debts. As for one who does not have enough money to pay off his debts, and dies while having the intention of settling them, Allah will settle them for him as indicated in many *hadîths*.

Thirdly: Rulings on Washing the Body of the Deceased

Washing the deceased is obligatory for those acquainted with the rulings and conditions of washing a deceased person and able to perform it. To illustrate, when the Prophet (PBUH) was informed of a man who fell down from

the back of his camel and broke his neck and died, he (PBUH) said, "...*wash him with water and sidr...*"[23] (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[24] Washing the deceased is reported to have been recurrently enjoined and observed by the Prophet (PBUH)[25]. Moreover, the body of the Prophet (PBUH) himself, the pure and purified Messenger, was washed (when he died),[26] what then will be the case of other Muslims?

Washing the deceased is a collective duty on those acquainted with his death (and able to perform it). Besides, washing the body of a deceased man should be performed by a man (and that of a deceased woman by a woman). In addition, it is better and highly recommended that the washer should be a trustworthy person who is well-acquainted with the rulings on washing a deceased person. This is because such a kind of washing is a legal ruling that has a special way of application and performance, and only those well-informed about it can perform it in the proper, legal way.

If one determines in one's will to be washed by a certain person when one dies, then that person should be given priority in washing one, provided he is a fair, trustworthy person. This is because Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) stated in his will to be washed (after his death) by Asmâ' Bint `Umays, his wife[27]. Thus, it is permissible for a woman to wash the body of her deceased husband and for a man, likewise, to wash his deceased wife's body. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), for example, determined in his will to be washed (after his death) by Mu<u>h</u>ammad Ibn Sîrîn.

The one stated in the dead person's will has the priority to wash him; after him comes the father, as a father is the worthiest person of washing his son. This is also because of a father's deep affection, tenderness, and sympathy for his son. After the deceased's father (regarding priority of washers) comes the grandfather, as he has the same affection for the deceased, then comes the closest kin, the closer, and so on. The closest person outside the family comes next in this regard, and then come last those unrelated to the deceased. It is important to point out that such prioritization of washers is to be applied if they are aware of the rulings on such washing and claim it; otherwise, priority should be given to those acquainted with its rulings over those unacquainted.

As for females, a body of a deceased female is to be washed by a female. Priority here is also given to the one stated in the will of the deceased woman. In other words, a woman determined in the will is to be given preference in washing her over anybody else, provided she is legally qualified for that, then

comes next the closest female relative to the deceased, then the closer, and so on and so forth.

In general, a body of a deceased woman is to be washed by a woman, and that of a man by a man, in the aforesaid sequence. Still, it is permissible for a husband to wash the body of his dead wife and vice versa, for Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), as mentioned above, stated in his will to be washed by his wife. In addition, `Ali Ibn Abû Tâlib (may Allah be pleased with him) washed the body of Fâtimah (his wife)[28]. The same is also reported to have been done by many other Companions[29].

Besides, it is permissible for men and women to wash the body of a young child under seven years, whether male or female. **Ibnul-Mundhir said,** *"All scholars, at whose hands we have learnt, unanimously agree that it is permissible for the woman to wash the body of a young boy."*[30] This is because nothing of the young boy's body - who is under seven - is regarded as *`awrah*[31] in his life, so this should be the case after his death also. To illustrate, the body of Ibrâhîm, the baby son of the Prophet (PBUH), was washed by women when he died. However, it is impermissible for a woman to wash the body of a deceased seven-year-old boy or upwards, and for a man to wash the body of a deceased seven-year-old girl or upwards.

It is also impermissible for a Muslim to wash the dead body of a disbeliever, carry his coffin to the grave, enshroud his body, perform the Funeral Prayer over him, or attend his funeral procession. This is because Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, do not make allies of a people with whom Allah has become angry..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mumtahinah: 13)

The general meaning of the verse indicates that it is prohibited to wash the body of a deceased disbeliever, carry his coffin, or follow his funeral procession. In addition, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And do not pray [the Funeral Prayer, O Muhammad,] over any of them who has died - ever - or stand at his grave. Indeed, they disbelieved in Allah..."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 84)

Allah also says:

> ***"It is not for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the polytheists..."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 113)

Thus, it is impermissible for Muslims to bury the body of a disbeliever, yet if there is no fellow disbeliever to bury him, a Muslim should throw his body into a hole so that it causes no harm to others. That was done by the Muslims to the bodies of the polytheists killed in the Battle of Badr, when they threw them into the well of Al-Qalîb. The same applies to apostates, like one who abandoned prayer intentionally and one who innovated a *bid'ah* (a matter innovated in religion) that leads to disbelief.

That should always be the Muslim's attitude toward a disbeliever, which indicates denial and hatred. Reporting the story of Prophet Ibrâhîm (Abraham) and those who believed with him, Allah reveals:

> ***"...When they said to their people, 'Indeed, we are disassociated from you and from whatever you worship other than Allah. We have denied you, and there has appeared between us and you animosity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah Alone...'"***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Mumtahinah: 4)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mujâdilah: 22)

This is because of the enmity existing between faith and disbelief, and because of that hatred born by the disbelievers toward Allah, His Messengers (peace be upon them all), and His Religion. Thereupon, it is impermissible for Muslims to support the disbelievers, whether alive or dead. We invoke Allah to make our hearts firm in sticking to the truth, and to guide us to His straight path.

On the other hand, when washing the body of a deceased Muslim the water used must be pure and legally permissible, and it is better to be cool. Yet, there is no harm in using hot water to remove any dirt from the body of the deceased, or in case of extremely cold weather. Besides, washing the deceased must be carried out in a sheltered, roofed place so that the deceased cannot be seen by others (except the washer), such as a house, a tent or the like, if possible.

It is obligatory to cover the parts between the navel and the knees of the deceased body before washing, then the whole body is to be uncovered (except the aforementioned parts). After that, the deceased is to be laid down in a sloping position on the washing (wooden) bed so that water and whatever comes out of the deceased's body flows down.

Washing the body of the deceased must be attended only by the washer and those assisting him; it is detestable for anyone else to attend the washing. The washer should raise the head of the deceased that the latter becomes in a semi-sitting position. Then, he passes his hand over the deceased's abdomen pressing it gently to allow anything withheld therein (such as excrements) to come out. While so doing, he should pour much water over the body to overflow and remove such excrements coming out (if any). After that, the washer wraps his hand with a coarse piece of cloth and cleans the stool and urine exits and the anus of the deceased with water.

After that, the washer declares his intention of washing the deceased, says *tasmiyah* (saying, "*Bismillâh*" i.e. "In the Name of Allah"), and purifies the dead person with the ablution performed for prayer. As for rinsing the mouth and the nose with water, it is sufficient to wipe over the teeth and nostrils with two wet fingers or pass a wet piece of cloth over them without letting any water enter the dead person's mouth or nostrils. Then, the washer washes the head and beard of the deceased with *sidr*[32] or soap. The washer then starts washing the deceased's body beginning with the right parts; he should first wash the right part of his neck, his right hand and shoulder, the right half of his chest, the right thigh, the right leg, and the right foot. After that, the washer rolls the deceased body to its left side and washes the right side of his back. Then the washer rolls him on his right side and washes the left side of his back in the same way.

During washing the deceased, the washer is to use *sidr* or soap, and it is desirable to wrap his hand at this time with a piece of cloth. It is obligatory to wash the deceased at least once, provided his body is thereby well purified, but it is desirable to wash him thrice. If the body of the deceased is still impure, it is permissible to wash him up till seven times. It is also desirable to use camphor in the last wash, as it makes the body stiff, fragrant, and cool. Besides, camphor is to be used at the last wash so that its effect remains.

Afterwards, the washer dries the body with a garment or the like, then cuts the moustache and clips the nails, if long, and removes the hair of the armpits, bearing in mind to keep all the cut hair and clipped nails to be put with the deceased in his shroud. As for a deceased woman, her hair is to be braided into three braids falling down backwards.

Sometimes it is difficult to wash the deceased because water is unavailable or for fear that his body would be torn apart because of washing, such as the cases when the deceased is a leper, or one killed by fire, or a woman whose husband is not present to wash her, or a man whose wife is not present to

wash him. In such cases, *tayammum* (performing dry ablution with clean earth) is to be performed for the deceased, wiping over the deceased's face and two palms with clean earth, using a piece of cloth or the like to hinder the washer's direct contact with the deceased's body. However, if it is difficult to wash only certain parts of the deceased's body, the washer then is to wash what is available and perform *tayammum* for those unwashed parts. It is desirable for the washer to have a ritual bathing following washing the deceased, yet it is not obligatory to do so.

Fourthly: Rulings on Shrouding

After washing and drying the body of the deceased, it is to be put in a shroud that must cover all his body. It is desirable to use a white clean shroud, whether new - which is better - or not. The obligatory size of the shroud is that which covers the whole body of the deceased.

It is desirable to shroud the deceased man in three shrouds of cloth and the woman in five pieces of cloth; a loincloth, a veil, a shirt, and two shrouds. As for deceased children, a boy is to be shrouded in one shroud, yet three are permissible, and a girl in one shirt and two shrouds. It is also desirable to subject the shroud to a censer, after being sprinkled with rose water or the like, so that the scent of incense would remain in the shroud.

The man is to be shrouded by spreading the three shrouds over each other, and then he is to be brought covered with a garment or the like as it is obligatory to be covered, and to be put lying with his face upwards on the three shrouds. Then a perfumed piece of cotton is to be put between the buttocks covering the anus of the deceased and fastened by tying a piece of cloth. Other similar perfumed cotton pieces are to be put on the eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, the parts of prostration (i.e. the forehead and the nose, both hands, both knees, and the bottom of the toes), under the armpits, the inner parts of the knees, and on the navel. The washer should also apply some perfume between the shrouds and to the head.

After that, the washer wraps the left side of the upper shroud (on which the deceased is lying face up) over the right side and its right side over his left side. Then the same is to be done with the second and the third shrouds; the superfluous parts of the shrouds should be longer toward the head than the feet. Then such remaining parts toward the head are to be gathered and put over his face and those toward his feet over his feet. Afterwards, belts of cloth are tied around the shrouds so as not to unwrap or loosen in the grave.

As for a deceased woman, as mentioned above, she is to be shrouded in five pieces of cloth: a loincloth, a shirt, a veil, and two shrouds.

Fifthly: Rulings on the Funeral Prayer

After washing and shrouding the deceased, the Funeral Prayer is to be performed over him. Abû Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, 'Whoever attends the funeral procession until he performs the Funeral Prayer for it will get a reward equal to one qîrât, and whoever accompanies it until burial will get a reward equal to two qîrâts.' It was asked, 'What are two qîrâts?' He (the Prophet) replied, '(They are) like two huge mountains (of reward).' "*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[33]

Performing the Funeral Prayer over the deceased is a collective duty; if performed by some of those in the neighborhood of the deceased, the rest of them will not be accountable for it; it is still an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to be observed by the rest of them. Yet, if all abandoned it, it will be a sin upon them all.

The conditions of the Funeral Prayer:

1-Intention; one must have the intention of performing it.

2-Facing the *qiblah*

3-Concealing one's *`awrah* when performing it

4-The ritual purity of both the one performing it and the deceased

5-Avoidance of any physical impurity

6-Both the one performing it and the deceased must be Muslims.

7-Attending the funeral procession after offering the Funeral Prayer if they are in the neighborhood

8-Being legally accountable

The integral parts of the Funeral Prayer:

1-Standing upright

2-Saying four *takbîrs*[34]

3-Reciting the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*

4-Asking Allah to confer His blessing upon the Prophet (PBUH)

5-Praying for the deceased

6-Performing these integral parts in sequence

7-Ending the prayer with *taslîm*[35]

The acts of the *Sunnah* observed in the Funeral Prayer:

1-Raising the hands upon saying each *takbîr*

2-Seeking refuge with Allah (from the accursed Satan) before reciting *Al-Fâtihah*

3-Invoking Allah for oneself and for all Muslims

4-Being quiet while reciting

5-Having a short pause after the fourth *takbîr* and before *taslîm*

6-Putting one's right hand over the left with both on the chest following each *takbîr*

7-Turning to the right when saying *taslîm*

The Way the Funeral Prayer is Performed

The Funeral Prayer is to be performed in the following way: The *imâm* (the one who leads the congregational prayer), or one performing it alone over a deceased person, should stand toward the chest of the deceased if a man and toward her middle if a woman. As for those led in prayer, they should stand behind the *imâm*, and it is an act of the *Sunnah* to stand in three rows. One begins with saying the opening *takbîr* and then seeks refuge with Allah (from Satan) directly following saying *takbîr* - without saying the opening invocation - then one recites *Basmalah*[36] and the Sura of *Al-Fâtihah*. After that, one is to say the second *takbîr* and ask Allah to confer His blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH) just as it is recited in *Tashahhud*. Then, one is to say the third *takbîr* and pray Allah for the deceased with the invocations reported to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH) in this regard; the following is derived from such Prophetic invocations:

> *"O Allah! Forgive those of us who are living and those of us who are dead, those of us who are present and those of us who are absent, our young and our old, and our male and our female. Verily, You know our return and our residence and You are over all things*

Omnipotent. O Allah! To whomsoever of us You give life, grant him life as a follower of Islam, and whomsoever of us You cause death, cause him death as a believer. O Allah! Do not withhold from us the reward (for showing patience upon his death) and do not leave us to go astray after him (i.e. after his death)[37]. *O Allah! Forgive him, have mercy upon him, give him peace, pardon him, receive him with honor, make his grave spacious and wash him with water, ice and snow. Cleanse him from sins and faults as a white garment is cleansed from impurity. Requite him with an abode that is more excellent than his abode and with a mate better than his mate. Admit him to Paradise, and protect him from the torture of the grave (or 'the torment of the Fire' according to another narration),*[38] *and make his grave spacious, and grant him light therein."*[39]

If the deceased is a female, the invocation will be thus, "*O Allah! Forgive her...*", referring to her in the whole invocation.

On the other hand, if the deceased is a child, the invocation will be as follows:

"O Allah! Make him precede his parents (to Paradise) and (let him be) saved, grant him (divine reward) and make him an accepted intercessor for them. O Allah! Make their scales heavy (with good deeds) by him, and make their reward greater for (showing patience for) him, and join him with the righteous believers, and let him be in the care of Ibrâhîm (Prophet Abraham), and protect him with Your Mercy from the punishment of the Fire..."[40]

Afterwards, those performing the Prayer over the deceased must say *takbîr* and wait a little then say one *taslîm*, turning their faces to the right.

As for the one who misses a part of the Funeral Prayer, he should join the prayer performing what is left thereof with the congregation led by the *imâm*. Then, when the *imâm* ends prayer with *taslîm*, one can perform the part one has missed in the same manner performed in this prayer. However, if one fears that people may carry the coffin and leave immediately after the (Funeral) Prayer and thus one misses the funeral procession, one can just say the missing *takbîrs* successively, saying nothing in between, then end the prayer with *taslîm*. On the other hand, if one misses performing the Funeral Prayer over the deceased before the burial, one can perform it at his grave. As for those who are not present in the town of the deceased and are informed of his death, they are to perform the Absent Prayer with the intention of performing the Funeral Prayer over the deceased.

As for a stillborn whose age is four months upward, the Funeral Prayer is to be performed over it; if less, there will be no Funeral Prayer over it.

Sixthly: Funeral Procession and Burial

It is a collective duty upon Muslims who know about the death of a Muslim to carry his coffin to the grave and bury him. Burial is legalized through both the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition). Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Have We not made the earth a container of the living and the dead?"*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mursalât: 25-26)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"Then He causes his death and provides a grave for him."*** (Qur'ân: `Abasa: 21)

Besides, there are numerous *hadîths* concerning burial, stating that it is an act of devotion and dutifulness signifying honor and concern for the deceased.

It is an act of the *Sunnah* to escort the deceased to his grave, as it is stated in the Two *Sahîhs*, as mentioned above, that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever attends the funeral procession until he performs the Funeral Prayer for it will get a reward equal to one qîrât, and whoever accompanies it until burial will get a reward equal to two qîrâts." When he (PBUH) was asked, "What are two qîrâts?" He replied, "(They are) like two huge mountains (of reward)."*[41]

There is another wording according to Al-Bukhârî's narration of this *hadîth* which goes as follows:

> *"Whoever escorts the deceased to the grave..."*

However, the wording of Imâm Muslim is:

> *"Whoever goes out accompanying a funeral from its house, offers prayer for it (i.e. the Funeral Prayer), and then follows it (its procession) until the deceased is buried..."*[42]

Thus, the different narrations of the aforesaid *hadîth* indicate that the Prophet (PBUH) enjoins us to escort the deceased to the grave.

It is an act of the *Sunnah* for those following the funeral procession to take part in carrying the coffin of the deceased, if possible. There is no harm in carrying the coffin in a car or on an animal, especially when the graveyard is distant.

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to hurry up with the dead body during the procession. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim:

> *"Hurry up with the dead body for if it is righteous, you are forwarding it to good, and if it is otherwise, then you are putting off an evil thing which is around your necks."*[43]

However, the funeral procession should not be excessively fast; those carrying the coffin and those following them should be in a state of tranquility and quietness. They should never raise their voices with recitation or anything else, whether it is *tahlîl*,[44] invocations, *dhikr*,[45] or saying, "May Allah forgive him (the deceased)," or the like. This is because all such acts are mere *bid`ah*s (matters innovated in religion).

Besides, it is prohibited for women to follow the funeral procession, for Umm `Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"We (women) were forbidden (by the Prophet) to follow funeral processions."*[46]

At the time of the Prophet (PBUH), women did not go out with funeral processions, for it is a ceremony restricted to men.

Moreover, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to deepen the grave and make it wide, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Dig graves and make them wide and deep."*
>
> (At-Tirmidhî commented that it is a *hasan sahîh* (good, authentic) *hadîth*.)[47]

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* to cover the grave of the woman when putting her body therein because all her body is regarded as `*awrah*.

In addition, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to say, while putting down the deceased in his grave:

> *"(We bury him) in the Name of Allah and according to the religion (i.e. the tradition) of Allah's Messenger (PBUH)."*

This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"When you put your dead persons in the graves, say, '(We bury) in the Name of Allah and according to the religion (i.e. the tradition) of Allah's Messenger (PBUH).'"

(Related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth* excluding An-Nasâ'î, and deemed a *hasan* (good) *hadîth* by At-Tirmidhî)[48]

The deceased is to be put in his grave on his right side facing the *qiblah*, for the Prophet (PBUH) said, referring to the Ka'bah:

"It is your qiblah in your life and after your death."

(Related by Abû Dâwûd and other compilers)[49]

After putting the deceased in the grave, a brick, a stone or some earth are to be put under his head. Besides, he is to be put close to the front wall of his grave. Also, some earth is to be put behind his back as a support lest he should fall on his face or be overturned on his back. Afterwards, the hole of the grave is to be closed with bricks and clay to hold it together, and then earth is to be piled up on his grave, using no earth other than that round his grave.

The top of the grave is to be of a height equal to a palm of the hand, and to be shaped like a humpback so that flood water, if any, would flow down and does not affect it. On the other hand, some pebbles are to be put on the grave which should be frequently watered to make earth settle and stick to the ground, not scatter. As for the idea behind making the grave that high, it is to make it distinguishable for people, lest they tread on it. Besides, there is no harm in putting some large upright bricks on both ends of the grave to make its limits clearly marked and distinguished, without writing anything on them.

It is desirable to stand at the grave of the deceased after burying him to supplicate Allah and ask His forgiveness for him. This is because once burial was over, the Prophet (PBUH) used to stand at the grave and say:

"Seek forgiveness for your (Muslim) brother and beg steadfastness (from Allah) for him, for he is being questioned now."

(Related by Abû Dâwûd)[50]

It is a *bid'ah* to recite the Qur'ân at graveyards, for neither the Prophet (PBUH) nor his honorable Companions were reported to have done so. Such a *bid'ah* must be avoided; every *bid'ah* is an error.

On the other hand, it is prohibited to build over graves, plaster them, or write on them. To illustrate, Jâbir Ibn `Abdullâh narrated:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) forbade that the graves should be plastered or be used as sitting places (for the people), or a building should be built over them."*
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)[51]

Besides, Jâbir narrated:

> *"The Messenger (PBUH) forbade plastering the graves, writing on them, building on them, or treading upon them."*
>
> (A *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* related and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by At-Tirmidhî)[52]

The reason for this prohibition is that such acts are means leading to polytheism, as they may make people's hearts attached to graves. On the other hand, many ignorant people become so attached to the graves when they see them in a form of well-decorated structures.

It is also prohibited to light graves (with lamps, or anything of the kind). The prohibition extends to include establishing mosques over graves and performing prayer at them or facing them in prayer. In addition, it is prohibited for women to visit graves according to the *hadîth* in which the Prophet said:

> *"May Allah curse the women who visit the graves, the people who build mosques over them, and those who establish mosques and (light) lamps therein."*
>
> (Related by the Compilers of the *Sunan*)[53]

It is also stated in a *sahih* (authentic) *hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"May Allah curse the Jews and Christians, for they built the places of worship at the graves of their prophets."*[54]

This is also because consecrating graves by means of building structures over them and the like is the origin of polytheism.

It is prohibited as well to degrade graves through walking on them, treading upon them with shoes, sitting on them, making them piles of garbage, or using them as drainage ditches. Abû Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"It is better that one of you should sit on live coals which would burn his clothing and come in contact with his skin than that he should sit on a grave."

(Related by Imâm Muslim as a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*)[55]

Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"If only we (Muslims) reflect on the (implications of) the Prophet's prohibition of sitting on the graves, leaning on them, and treading upon them, we would come to know that the Prophet (PBUH) instructs us to venerate the inhabitants of the graves from their heads being trodden on with footwear."

Seventhly: Rulings on Condolence and Visiting Graves

It is an act of the *Sunnah* to console the bereaved person and advise him to be patient, and to pray for the deceased, for `Amr Ibn Hazm narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"No believer consoles his (bereaved Muslim) brother (by advising him to show patience) but Allah, Almighty and Ever-Majestic be He, will dress him from the garments of dignity on the Day of Resurrection."

(A *marfû* (traceable) *hadîth`* with a trustworthy chain of transmitters related by Ibn Mâjah)[56]

There are also various *hadîth*s having the same meaning. When consoling a bereaved one, the wording of condolence is to be: *"May Allah make your reward great, comfort you with a better compensation, and forgive your deceased."*

It is impermissible to have a sitting place for receiving and declaring condolences, as mistakenly done by some people today. Yet, it is desirable to prepare some food for the family of the deceased, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Prepare some food for the family of Ja`far, for it has happened to them that which occupied them (i.e. the death of Ja`far)."

(Related by Imâm Ahmad and At-Tirmidhî; the latter deemed it a *hasan* (good) *hadîth)*[57]

Some of the family of the deceased nowadays specify a place for people to gather for offering their condolences, prepare food for them and hire reciters

of the Qur'ân, and spend so much on that occasion. Such acts are undoubtedly prohibited *bid`ahs* (matters innovated in religion), for Imâm Ahmad narrated with a trustworthy chain of transmitters that Jarîr Ibn `Abdullâh said:

> *"We (the Companions) used to consider gathering with the family of the deceased and the preparation of food (by the family of the dead person) after his burial a kind of (prohibited) wailing."*[58]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Gathering people by the bereaved family, offering them food and reciting the Qur'ân to grant him (the deceased) the reward of recitation, were never practiced in the time of the Salaf (early Muslim scholars). Such acts were deemed detestable by some groups of scholars because of many proofs."*[59]

At-Turtûshî said:

> *"As for the funeral ceremonies, they are prohibited as unanimously agreed upon by scholars; such gatherings on occasions of calamities are legally denied bid`ahs. They have never been reported to have been previously observed (by the Prophet or his Companions or their successors). The same applies to those gatherings on the second, third, fourth and seventh day of the death of the deceased, as well as those held monthly and yearly; this is a catastrophe. Besides, if the expenses of such gatherings (i.e. the costs of foods and hiring reciters of the Qur'ân) were taken from the inheritance, or one of the heirs is under guardianship or does not grant permission for such gatherings, all these gathering will be legally prohibited, and so will be eating from that food."*[60]

It is desirable for men to visit graves as a means of moral lessons and as an admonition, and for the purpose of praying for the deceased and asking Allah's forgiveness for him. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"I forbade you (men) to visit the graves, but you may visit them now."*
>
> (Related by Muslim and At-Tirmidhî)

According to At-Tirmidhî's narration, the Prophet (PBUH) added:

> *"...for it (i.e. visiting graves) will remind you of the Hereafter."*[61]

Yet, it is not desirable to travel so as to visit graves. Generally, visiting graves is desirable on three conditions:

The visitor must be a man not a woman, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"May Allah curse women who visit the graves."

Graves should not be so distant that they require traveling or setting out on a journey to visit them; the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Do not set out on a journey except for three Mosques..."[62][63]

Visiting graves should be for the purpose of taking moral lessons and admonition, and for praying to Allah for the deceased. However, if one's intention behind visiting graves is seeking their blessings and asking their inhabitants (the dead) for assistance, relief of suffering and fulfillment of needs, one's visit then will be a mere polytheistic *bid'ah*.

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Visiting graves is of two kinds; a legal visit and a bid'ah (a matter innovated in religion). The legal visit is the one intended to invoke Allah to confer His blessings upon the deceased and to pray to Allah for him, just like the Funeral Prayer, provided it does not require setting out for long journeys. As for the visit which is a bid'ah, it is the one intended for asking the deceased for fulfilling one's needs, which is considered major polytheism. It is also the visit intended for invoking Allah for oneself at such a grave so that the invocation would be granted, or for using the deceased as a medium while invoking Allah at the grave, which are among the abominable bid'ahs leading to polytheism. Such acts have nothing to do with the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) nor have they been deemed desirable by any of the Salaf (early Muslim scholars) of the Muslim nation or the Muslim Imâms."[64]

At any rate, Allah, Exalted be He, knows best. May Allah's peace and blessing be upon our Prophet, Muhammad (PBUH), his household, and his Companions!

Endnotes

1 See: "*Zâdul-Ma'âd*" (1/498).
2 At-Tirmidhî (2312) [4/553], An-Nasâ'i (1823) [2/301], and Ibn Mâjah (4258) [4/495. Ibn Hibbân (2992) [7/259] and Al-Hâkim (7990) [4/465].
3 At-Tirmidhî (2463) [4/637].
4 Ibn Hibbân (1391) [4/233] and Al-Bayhaqî (19679) [10/8].
5 Abû Dâwûd (3874) [4/134].
6 Muslim (5112) [7/152].

7 Al-Bukhârî (1240) and Muslim (5615) [7/367].
8 Al-Bukhârî (7470) [13/546]
9 Chapter No. 112 of the Qur'ân.
10 Chapter No. 113 of the Qur'ân.
11 Chapter No. 114 of the Qur'ân, i.e. the last Chapter of the Qur'ân.
12 Al-Bukhârî (2738) [5/436] and Muslim (4183) [6/77].
13 *Qudsî* (Divine) *hadîth*: Divine Words, other than the Glorious Qur'ân, revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) from Allah. Unlike the Qur'ân, the words of the *Qudsî* (Divine) *hadîth* are neither used for worship nor deemed miraculous.
14 Al-Bukhârî (7405) [13/469] and Muslim (6887) [9/63].
15 Muslim (2120, 2122) [3/458, 459].
16 Abû Dâwûd (3116) [3/318].
17 Chapter No. 36 of the Qur'ân.
18 Abû Dâwûd (3121) [3/320], Ibn Mâjah (1448) [2/195], and Ibn Hibbân (3002) [7/269].
19 Muslim (2127) [3/461].
20 Al-Bukhârî (5814) [10/340] and Muslim (2180) [4/13].
21 Abû Dâwûd (3159) [3/333].
22 Ahmad (9642) [2/440], At-Tirmidhî (1079) [3/389] and Ibn Mâjah (2413) [3/145].
23 *Sidr*: The extract of the lote tree leaves.
24 Al-Bukhârî (1265) [3/174] and Muslim (2883) [4/365].
25 Al-Bukhârî [3/161] and Muslim [4/5].
26 Abû Dâwûd (3141) [3/328] and Ibn Mâjah (1464) [2/202].
27 Al-Bayhaqî (6663) [3/557]. `Abdur-Razzâq in his "*Musannaf*" (6117) [3/408] and Ibn Abû Shaybah (10969) [2/455].
28 Al-Bayhaqî (6660) [3/556], `Abdur-Razzâq (6122) [3/410] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (1833) [2/66].
29 Al-Bayhaqî (6662) [3/556].
30 See: "*Al-Ijmâ`*" (pp. 50) and "*Al-Awsat*" [5/338]. Ibn Abû Shaybah (10988) [2/457].
31 `*awrah*: The private parts or parts of the body which are illegal to expose to others; a male's `*awrah* is from the navel to the knees whereas in another view it is said to be the external organs of sex and excretion. As for a female's `*awrah*, it includes all her body in one view whereas in another it is all her body with the exception of her face and hands.
32 *Sidr*: The extract of the lote tree leaves.
33 Al-Bukhârî (1325) [3/250] and Muslim (2186) [4/16].
34 *Takbîr*: Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
35 *Taslîm*: Saying the final *Salâms* in prayer (saying, "*As-salâmu `alaykum wa Rahmatullâh*" i.e. "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah") when concluding prayer.
36 *Basmalah*: Saying, "*Bismillâhir-Rahmânir-Rahîm*" i.e. "In the Name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful."
37 Abû Dâwûd (3201) [3/350], At-Tirmidhî (1025) [3/343] and Ibn Mâjah (1498) [2/218].
38 Muslim (2229) [4/34].
39 Muslim (2127) [3/461].
40 Ibn Abû Shaybah (29829) [6/107] and `Abdur-Razzâq (6588) [3/529].
41 Al-Bukhârî (1325) and Muslim (945).
42 Muslim (2192) [4/19]
43 Al-Bukhârî (1315) [3/233] and Muslim (2183) [4/15].

44 *Tahlîl*: Saying, "*Lâ Ilâha illallâh*" (i.e. There is no deity but Allah).
45 *Dhikr*: Invocations implying remembrance of and mentioning Allah.
46 Al-Bukhârî (313) [1/536] and Muslim (2164) [4/5].
47 Abû Dâwûd (3216) [3/356] and (3215) [3/355], and At-Tirmidhî (1717) [4/213].
48 Ahmad (5370) [2/70], Abû Dâwûd (3213) [3/355], At-Tirmidhî (1046) [3/364], and Ibn Mâjah (1550) [2/241].
49 Abû Dâwûd (2875) [3/199].
50 Abû Dâwûd (3221) [3/357].
51 Muslim (2242) [4/41].
52 At-Tirmidhî (1053) [3/368] and An-Nasâ'i (2026) [2/391]. Ibn Mâjah (1562, 1563) [2/247, 248].
53 Ahmad (2030) [1/230], Abû Dâwûd (3236) [3/362], At-Tirmidhî (320) [2/136] and An-Nasâ'i (2042) [2/400]. Ibn Mâjah (1575) [2/254].
54 Al-Bukhârî (435) [1/688] and Muslim (1187) [3/16].
55 Muslim (2245) [4/41].
56 Ibn Mâjah (1601) [2/268].
57 Ahmad (1750) [1/253], Abû Dâwûd (3132) [3/325], At-Tirmidhî (999) [3/323], Ibn Mâjah (1610) [2/274].
58 Ahmad (6902) [2/270] and Ibn Mâjah (1612) [2/275].
59 See: "*Majmû'ul-Fatâwâ*" (24/316).
60 See: "*Al-Hawâdith wa Al-Bida'* " (pp. 175).
61 Muslim (2257) [4/50], At-Tirmidhî (1055) [3/370]. See also Abû Dâwûd (3698) [4/65].
62 They are the Sacred Mosque, the Prophet's Mosque and Al-Aqsâ Mosque.
63 Al-Bukhârî (1189) [3/82] and Muslim (3370) [5/169].
64 See: "*Majmû'ul-Fatâwâ*" [24/326] and [26/148].

III: ZAKÂH

Zakâh: Legality and Virtue

Dear Muslim brothers, a Muslim must know the details of the rulings on *Zakâh*, its conditions, those required to pay it, those for whom it is to be paid, and the properties from which it is to be paid. This is because *Zakâh* is one of the pillars of Islam and its great basis as clearly indicated by the Noble Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition). Allah, Exalted be He, has joined it with performing Prayer in His Book in eighty-two positions, which signifies its great status and the perfection of the connection between it and prayer and the firmness of the relation between them. The trustworthy person of that nation who was the first Caliph after Allah's Messenger (PBUH), Abû Bakr As-Sidîq (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"By Allah! I will fight those who differentiate between Prayer and Zakâh."*[1]

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And establish prayer and give Zakâh..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 43)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"...But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give Zakâh, let them [go] on their way..."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 5)

Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) says:

> *"Islam is based on (the following) five (principles): (i) to testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; (ii) to perform the (compulsory congregational) Prayers dutifully and perfectly; (iii) to pay Zakâh..."*[2]

Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that *Zakâh* is an obligatory act and that it is the third pillar of Islam, and he who denies this is considered a disbeliever, and whoever refrains from giving it is to be fought.

Zakâh was enjoined in the second year of *Hijrah* of the Prophet (PBUH) (Immigration to Medina). Allah's Messenger (PBUH) sent *Zakâh* collectors to receive it, in order to deliver it to those who deserve it. The same was done by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and Muslims after the Prophet (PBUH).

Paying *Zakâh* is an act of benevolence toward the people, a means of purifying the property from defilement, a protection against destruction, and a worship of the Lord, Exalted be He. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Take, [O Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them, Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing."***
>
> (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 103)

Hence, it purifies the souls from stinginess and avarice, and it is also a trial to the rich person since he approaches Allah by giving some of his property that he likes.

Allah has enjoined *Zakâh* on the property that can provide sustenance to others and which multiplies and incurs much profit (i.e. that which spontaneously multiplies as cattle and harvest, and which multiplies by investment and management like gold, silver and trading commodities). Moreover, Allah has

ordained the amount of *Zakâh* according to the effort exerted in the property from which it is paid, so He enjoined one-fifth on *rikâz* (buried wealth). However, Allah enjoined one-tenth to be paid as *Zakâh* on the property which needs more effort such as the land watered without exerting too much effort. Moreover, in properties that need much effort, one-twentieth (5%) is to be given as *Zakâh*. In addition, for what involves much effort and difficulty, as in money and trading commodities, one-fortieth (2.5%) is to be paid.

Allah has called *Zakâh* by that name, as this word, in Arabic, means purifying the soul and the money. It is not a fine or a tax that reduces the property and harms its owner. Contrarily, it makes the property grow more. Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *"The wealth does not decrease out of giving in charity."*[3]

Zakâh, according to *Sharî`ah* (Islamic Law), is **a rightful obligation on a special property of a particular group of people to be paid at a particular time.** The time when *Zakâh* is to be paid is:

- When a complete year passes with regard to cattle, money, and trading commodities
- When grains become hard and the signs indicating ripeness appear, with regard to fruits
- With regard to honey, *Zakâh* is to be paid when it reaches the amount liable for *Zakâh*
- The mining of minerals upon which *Zakâh* is to be paid, with regard to minerals
- Concerning *Zakâtul-Fiṭr* (Fast-breaking *Zakâh*), it is to be paid after the sun sets of the vigil of the Fast-breaking Feast (*`Îdul-Fiṭr*) but before performing the Feast Prayer[4]

A Muslim must give *Zakâh* if he/she meets five conditions:

Being a free person: *Zakâh* is not imposed on a slave, because he possesses no property, and what is in his hand belongs to his master; therefore, his master is the one who must pay his *Zakâh*.

Being a Muslim: The second condition is that the owner of the property must be a Muslim, as *Zakâh* is not imposed on a disbeliever. A disbelieving person is not asked to pay it, because it is an act of approaching Allah as well as

an act of showing obedience, and the disbeliever is not amongst those people close and obedient to Allah. It also needs intention, which is impossible to arise from a disbeliever.

Whether it is to be imposed on the disbeliever or not and whether he is to be punished particularly in the Hereafter for not paying it or not, it is still a controversial issue among scholars. Furthermore, in the *hadîth* narrated by Mu`âdh (may Allah be pleased with him) in which the Prophet (PBUH) said to him:

> "...*Invite the people to testify that there is no deity but Allah and I am the Messenger of Allah.*"

Then the Prophet (PBUH) added after he had mentioned performing Prayer:

> "... *If they obey you to do so, then tell them that Allah has made it obligatory for them to pay Zakâh from their property and it is to be taken from the wealthy among them and given to the poor.*"
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[5]

Thus, the Prophet (PBUH) made the conversion to Islam a prerequisite for the obligation of *Zakâh*.

Having the *nisâb*[6]: The third condition is the possession of the *nisâb*; thus, no *Zakâh* is due upon what is less than the *nisâb*. It does not make any difference whether the possessor of the *nisâb* is old or young, sane or insane, as the legal proofs pertaining to this are general, i.e. there is no specification mentioned in this regard.

Being an established owner of the property: The fourth condition is that the ownership of the property must be settled, so that none lays claim to it. Thereupon, no *Zakâh* is due upon a property whose ownership is not established, such as the debt of a *mukâtab*,[7] since the *mukâtab* still has the right not to fulfill the agreement.

The elapse of a full lunar year on the property: The fifth condition is that a year must lapse on the property, owing to the *hadîth* of `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) saying:

> "*No Zakâh is to be taken from a property until a year passes on it.*"
>
> (Related by Ibn Mâjah, and At-Tirmidhî has related its meaning as well)[8].

This is concerning what does not issue from the land as grains and fruits. However, as for what is produced from the land, *Zakâh* is entailed upon it whenever it exists. Thus, the lapse of a year is irrelevant for it, whereas the completion of a year remains stipulated with regard to money, cattle and trading commodities, as a kind of leniency toward the owner in order that the property can grow.

As for the offspring of cattle liable to *Zakâh* and the profit gained in trade, the lapse of the year is to be counted with regard to the original capital. Thus, it is not necessary that a complete year passes on the offspring of cattle or the profit if their original capital has reached the *niṣâb*. If it has not, the year is to be estimated from the time they complete the *niṣâb*.

As for the creditor of an insolvent person, the creditor is to pay the due *Zakâh* of the debt when he receives it in case the debt has remained for a whole year with the indebted. This is according to the soundest opinion of scholars. However, when being the creditor of a rich solvent person, the creditor is to pay *Zakâh* due upon this property each year.

Moreover, no *Zakâh* is due upon any property set for possession or usage such as one's dwelling house, clothes, the furniture, the vehicles and the animals prepared for riding and usage. As for what is set for rent as vehicles, stores and houses, no *Zakâh* is due upon its original capital but *Zakâh* is due upon the rent paid for such a property if it reaches the *niṣâb* alone or by adding it to another estate and a complete year lapses.

As for the one upon whom *Zakâh* is obligatory and he dies before paying it, it must be paid from his inheritance and is not annulled by his death. This is because Allah's Messenger (PBUH) says:

"...*Allah's debts have more right to be paid.*"

(Related by Al-Bukhârî, Muslim and other compilers of *Hadîth*)[9]

The inheritor or others are to pay it from the inheritance of the deceased because it is a due right and it is not annulled by death. Furthermore, it is a debt obligatory upon the deceased and he must be absolved from it.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (1399) [3/331] and Muslim (124) [1/50].
2 Al-Bukhârî (8) [1/69] and Muslim (111) [1/128].
3 Ahmad (17954) [4/231] and At-Tirmidhî (2330) [4/562]. See also Muslim (6535) [8/357], Ahmad (7205) [2/236], (8986) [2/387] and At-Tirmidhî (2034) [4/376].
4 It is permissible to give *Zakâtul-Fitr* (Fast-breaking *Zakâh*) any time during the month of Ramadân.
5 Al-Bukhârî (1395) [3/330] and Muslim (121) [1/146].
6 *Nisâb*: The minimum amount upon which *Zakâh* is due.
7 *Mukâtab*: A slave who has concluded a contract with his/her master to pay him a certain ransom for his/her freedom.
8 Ibn Mâjah (1792) [2/373] and At-Tirmidhî (630,631) [3/25,26].
9 Al-Bukhârî (1953) [4/245] and Muslim (2688) [4/266]. See also Al-Bukhârî (7315) [13/362].

Zakâh: Grazing Animals and Livestock

Among the properties upon which Allah has imposed *Zakâh*, are the grazing animals and livestock, namely camels, cows and sheep. Moreover, it is foremost among the properties dictating the payment of *Zakâh*. Many recurrent *sahih* (authentic) *hadîths* of the Prophet (PBUH) indicate paying *Zakâh* with respect to the grazing animals and livestock. His messages concerning it as well as the messages of his caliphs are well-known and famous in illustrating its enjoined rules. The Prophet (PBUH) also sent the collectors of *Zakâh* to collect it from the Arab tribes around Medina and other places all along the stretch of the Muslim lands.

Thus, *Zakâh* is obligatory in case of camels, cows and sheep on two conditions:

The first condition: They must be used for producing milk and for reproduction, not for toil, because in the former case their benefits multiply

and they thrive by growing big and giving offspring, so they can provide sustenance to others.

The second condition: They must be grazing livestock (i.e. feed on herbage in a field or on pastureland), on account of the *hadîth* of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) in which he says:

> *"Concerning the (grazing) livestock, a two- year-old she-camel is to be paid (as Zakâh) on every forty camels."*
>
> (Related by Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd and An-Nasâ'î)[1]

Thus, the livestock must be grazing, as no *Zakâh* is due upon animals that are fed with fodder bought for them or picked from herbage or another place; that is in case they are fed throughout the year or most of it.

First: *Zakâh* Due on Camels

If these conditions are fulfilled, a sheep is to be given as *Zakâh* for every five camels, two sheep in case they are ten camels, three in case they are fifteen camels and four in case they are twenty camels, as indicated by the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) and the consensus of Muslim scholars.

In case the number of the camels reaches twenty-five camels, a one-year-old she-camel is to be given as *Zakâh*. In this age, its mother most probably becomes pregnant; nevertheless, the mother's pregnancy is not a condition. If there is not a one-year-old she-camel, a two-year-old male camel may serve instead of it. This is based on the *hadîth* narrated by Anas on the authority of Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) in which he says:

> *"... If there is not a she-camel in its second year, so a two-year-old he-camel (is to be paid as Zakâh)."*
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)[2]

If the number of camels reaches thirty-six, a two-year-old she-camel (the offspring of a milch she-camel) is to be given as *Zakâh*. This is based on the *hadîth* narrated by Anas on the authority of Abû Bakr concerning *Zakâh*, in which he says:

> *"...If the number of the camels is from thirty-six to forty-five, one two-year-old she-camel is to be paid."*[3]

This is indicated by the consensus of Muslim scholars. The two-year-old she-camel is the offspring of a milch she-camel and it is named so because its mother most probably has delivered its baby and has become a milch camel. Still, it is not a condition that its mother be a milch camel but it is a prevalent definition for it.

If the camels reach forty-six, a three-year-old she-camel is to be given as *Zakâh*. By attaining such age, it becomes mature enough to be fertilized by the male, to carry loads and to be ridden.

If the camels reach sixty-one, a four-year-old she-camel is to be given as *Zakâh*. When the camel reaches this age, its teeth begin to fall. This is due to what is related in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* from the *hadîth* of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) which reads:

> *"...If the camels are from sixty-one to seventy-five, one she-camel in its fifth year is to be given (as Zakâh)."*[4]

Moreover, Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed upon that.

If the number of camels reaches seventy-six, two she-camels of two-year-old (the offspring of a milch she-camel) are to be given as *Zakâh*. This is based on the *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* in which Allah's Messenger (PBUH) says:

> *"...If the number is from seventy-six to ninety (camels), two she-camels in their third year are to be given (as Zakâh)."*[5]

If the camels reach ninety-one, two three-year-old she-camels are to be paid as *Zakâh*. This comes from the *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* which says:

> *"...If they are from ninety-one to one hundred and twenty (camels), two she-camels in their fourth year are to be given (as Zakâh)."*

In addition, Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed upon that.

If the number of camels surpasses one hundred and twenty, three two-year-old she-camels (the offspring of a milch she-camel) are to be given as *Zakâh*. This is based on the *hadîth* the Prophet (PBUH) wrote concerning *Zakâh*, and which says:

> *"...If they are over one-hundred and-twenty (camels), for every forty a two-year-old she-camel is to be paid; or for every fifty camels a three-year-old she-camel is to be given (as Zakâh)."*

Second: *Zakâh* Due on Cows

As for cows, *Zakâh* is to be paid according to legal texts and the consensus of Muslim scholars. It is related in the Two *Sahîhs* that Jâbir narrated:

> *"I heard Allah's Messenger (PBUH) saying, 'No owner of camels, or cattle or sheep and goats, who does not pay the due Zakâh but these (camels, cattle, sheep and goats) will come on the Day of Resurrection*

having more flesh and will gore him with their horns and trample on him with their hooves.' "[6]

Moreover, Mu`âdh (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

"When the Prophet (PBUH) sent me to Yemen, he ordered me to take a one-year-old male or a female calf for every thirty cows, and (also to take) a two year-old cow for every forty."

(Related by Ahmad and At-Tirmidthî)[7]

So, if the number of the cows reaches thirty, a male or female one-year-old calf is to be given as *Zakâh*. Nothing is due in what is less than thirty cows, according to the *hadîth* narrated by Mu`âdh (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) sent me to Yemen (to collect Zakâh), he ordered me not to take anything (as Zakâh) for cows until they reach thirty (in number)."[8]

If the number of cows reaches forty, a two-year-old cow is to be given as *Zakâh*. This is also according to the *hadîth* narrated by Mu`âdh (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"The Prophet (PBUH) sent me to Yemen (to collect Zakâh) and ordered me to take a one-year-old male or a female calf for every thirty cows, and (also to take) a two-year-old cow for every forty."

(Related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth* and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by Ibn Hibbân and Al-Hâkim)[9]

If the number of cows surpasses forty, a one-year-old calf is to be given as *Zakâh* for every thirty cows, or a two-year-old cow for every forty.

Third: *Zakâh* Due on Sheep

Giving *Zakâh* from sheep is obligatory according to the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) and the consensus of Muslim scholars. In the Two *Sahîhs*, Anas narrated that Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) wrote to him saying:

"These are the orders for Zakâh which Allah's Messenger (PBUH) had made obligatory for Muslims, and which Allah had ordered His Messenger to observe..."

He added:

> *"...As regards Zakâh for the (flock of) sheep, if they are between forty and one hundred and twenty sheep, one sheep is to be given (as Zakâh)."*

If the number of sheep reaches forty (whether they are sheep or goats), one sheep (or goat) is to be given as *Zakâh*. It must be a six-month old sheep in case of sheep, or one-year-old goat in case of goats. This is according to the *hadîth* narrated by Suwayd Ibn Ghaflah who said:

> *"The collector of Zakâh sent by Allah's Messenger (PBUH) came to us and said, 'We are ordered (by the Prophet) to take from what completed six months of age of sheep; and to take what completed one year old of goats.'"*[10]

No *Zakâh* is to be taken from sheep if the number is less than forty. This is based on the *hadîth* of Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), related in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, which says:

> *"If somebody has got less than forty sheep, no Zakâh is required, but if the owner wants to give anything in charity, he can."*

If the number of sheep reaches one hundred and twenty one, two sheep are to be given as *Zakâh*, based on the *hadîth* of Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) that has been mentioned before, which says:

> *"...If the (number of) sheep is over one hundred and twenty, two sheep are due (as Zakâh)."*

If their number reaches two hundred and one, then three sheep are to be given as *Zakâh*. This is also based on the *hadîth* of Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), which says:

> *"...If they are over two hundred, three sheep are due."*

After that number of sheep, the due number to be given as *Zakâh* in sheep is fixed. Thus, one sheep is to be given as *Zakâh* for every hundred sheep. So, for every four hundred sheep, four sheep are to be given as *Zakâh*; for every five hundred sheep, five sheep are to be given as *Zakâh*; for every six hundred sheep, six sheep are to be given as *Zakâh* and so forth. It is stated in the book of *Zakâh*, which Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) acted according to until he died and so did `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) until he died, that:

"...As regards the (flock of) sheep, for every forty sheep up to one hundred and twenty, one sheep is due (as Zakâh). If the (number of) sheep is over that up to two hundred, two sheep are due. But if they are over two hundred by only one sheep, three sheep are due up to three hundred. If they surpass three hundred, no Zakâh is to be paid until they reach four hundred). If the number of sheep is over that (four hundred), then one sheep is to be given as Zakâh for every hundred sheep."

(Related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth* except An-Nasâ'î)[11]

Furthermore, an old sheep is not to be accepted as *Zakâh*, nor a defective one which is not fit as a sacrificial animal except if all the sheep are the same. Moreover, the pregnant one is not to be accepted, nor the one that suckles its baby, nor the one fitting to be fertilized by the male because in most cases it becomes pregnant. This is based on the *hadîth* of Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) related in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, which says:

"...Neither an old nor a defective animal nor a male-goat is to be taken as Zakâh except if the collector of Zakâh wishes (to take it)."[12]

Moreover, Allah, the Exalted, says:

"...And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, spending [from that]..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 267)

Furthermore, Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

"...But one should give animals of medium quality, for Allah does not demand from you the best of your animals, nor does He command you to give the animals of worst quality."[13]

The best animal, which is the most precious to its owner, is not to be taken as *Zakâh*. Also, the animal that eats much, which is either fat and is prepared for eating, or the one marked by gluttony and grows fat because of it, is not to be taken as *Zakâh*. Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said to Mu'âdh Ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) when he sent him to Yemen:

"...Avoid taking the best of their properties."

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

In charities, what is to be taken is the property of medium quality as stated by the Prophet (PBUH):

"*...But one should give animals of medium quality.*"

Thus, a sick animal is to be taken from among a *nisâb*[14] that is all sick, because *Zakâh* is ordained to provide sustenance to others, and obliging one to give a sound one out of the sick group is unfair to the one giving *Zakâh*. In addition, a youngster is to be taken from among a *nisâb* that is all young, especially from the sheep. Yet, if the proprietor desires to give better than that enjoined upon him, it will certainly be better and greater in reward for him.

If the property is a mixture of grown-up and young, sound and defective, or male and female animals, a sound grown-up female is to be taken based on estimating the value of the superior and inferior divisions of the property. Firstly, the superior part of the property is to be estimated to know what should be taken as *Zakâh* and the same is to be done with regard to the inferior part. After that, the due *Zakâh* is to be taken justly on an average basis from among the whole property. The same is to be applied with respect to the other types of sound and defective, or male and female sheep. So, if the value of *Zakâh* that is to be given is twenty sheep, in case the whole *nisâb* is of grown-up sound sheep; and its value is ten in case the *nisâb* is of young sick sheep, then the given *Zakâh* is to be one half of that and one half of that. Thus, fifteen sheep are to be given as *Zakâh*.

Among the objects of research in *Zakâh* of grazing livestock are the rules of partnership; when the sum of the mixed livestock is shared between two persons or more. Such partnership is of two types:

The first type: The mixed partnership in which the property is common and shared between the owners and the property of one of them is not distinguished from the other's. In this case, one of them may own half the livestock, its quarter or the like.

The second type: The determinate partnership; where each one has a known, distinguished share, yet their properties are adjacent. Each of the two kinds of partnerships influences *Zakâh* positively or by deduction, augments it or lessens it.

Partnership with its two types renders the two-shared properties as one, but with conditions:

The first condition: The sum equals the *nisâb*. If it is less than the *nisâb*, nothing is to be taken from it. The sum must equal the *nisâb*, even if what each of the owners possesses is less than the *nisâb*.

The second condition: The two partners are from the people upon whom *Zakâh* is rightfully enjoined. If one of them is not from amongst those people (a disbeliever for example), then the partnership will be irrelevant and each share will be subject to its own rules.

The third condition: The two properties share the same shelter or lodging, and share the same yard where they are gathered to go to the pasturage. Moreover, they must share the same place of milking. If one of the partners milks his livestock in a place and the other milks his own in another place, then the partnership will be irrelevant with regard to *Zakâh*. In addition, the two-shared properties must share the same male animal which fertilizes them all. Also, both properties must graze in the same pasturage. If the pasturage differs and one partner's share grazes in a place other than the place where his partner herds his own livestock, then the partnership will be irrelevant with regard to *Zakâh*.

If these conditions are fulfilled, the two-shared properties are deemed as one. This is based on the *hadîth* of the Prophet (PBUH) in which he said:

> *"Neither the property of different people may be taken together nor the joint property may be split for fear of (giving more, or receiving less) Zakâh."*
>
> (Related by At-Tirmidthî, Abû Dâwûd, and Ibn Mâjah, and deemed a *hasan* (good) *hadîth* by At-Tirmidthî)[15]

If a person owns one sheep while the other owns thirty-nine, or if forty men own forty sheep, a sheep for each, and they remain partners for a whole year with the fulfillment of the aforementioned conditions, then only one sheep is due as *Zakâh* for their joint property. In the first case, the owner of the sheep is to give one-fortieth (2.5%) of the sheep as *Zakâh*, and the rest (97.5%) are to be given by the owner of the thirty-nine sheep. In the second case, each of the forty men is to give 2.5% of the sheep as *Zakâh*. Also, if three men possess one hundred and twenty sheep, where each of them owns forty, all of them are to give one sheep as *Zakâh*, one third each.

As partnership influences the amount of *Zakâh* the way explained previously, division also may influence the amount of *Zakâh*, according to the opinion of Imâm Ahmad. Thus, if the grazing livestock of a person is separated, where every part is removed from the other a distance that entails shortening prayer, then each part is to be subjected to its own rulings and it

will be unrelated to the other part of the property. If one part is equal to the *nisâb*, *Zakâh* is to be given from it. If it is less than the *nisâb*, nothing is to be given as *Zakâh*. Thus, no part is to be joined to the other, as stated by Imâm Ahmad. However, the majority of Muslim scholars are of the opinion that division does not influence the property of a single person. One part is to be added to the other in judgment, even if divided. This is the soundest opinion; and Allah knows best.

Endnotes

1 Ahmad (19901) [5/2], (19921) [5/4], Abû Dâwûd (1575) [2/159] and An-Nasâ'î (2443) [3/17].
2 Abû Dâwûd (1567) [2/146] and Al-Bukhârî (1448) [3/393].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1454) [3/399].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1454) [3/399].
5 Al-Bukhârî (1454) [3/399].
6 Muslim (2293) [4/72]. Al-Bukhârî (1402) [3/338] and Muslim (2287) [4/67].
7 At-Tirmidhî (622) [3/20] and An-Nasâ'î (2449) [2/26].
8 At-Tirmidhî (622) [3/20] and An-Nasâ'î (2449) [2/26].
9 Abû Dâwûd (1576) [2/160], At-Tirmidhî (622) [3/20], An-Nasâ'î (2450) [2/26] and Ibn Mâjah (1803) [2/382].
10 Abû Dâwûd (1581) [2/163]. See also "*Nasbur-Râyah*" (2/354-355).
11 Abû Dâwûd (1568) [2/154], At-Tirmidhî (620) [3/17] and Ibn Mâjah (1805) [2/383]. See also An-Nasâ'î (2446) [3/20] and Al-Bukhârî (1454) [3/399].
12 Al-Bukhârî (1455) [3/404].
13 Abû Dâwûd (1582) [2/164].
14 *Nisâb*: The minimum amount upon which *Zakâh* is due.
15 Abû Dâwûd (1580) [2/162], An-Nasâ'î (2456) [2/30], Ibn Mâjah (1801) [2/381] and At-Tirmidhî (620) [3/17]. See also Al-Bukhârî (1450) [3/395].

Zakâh: Grains, Fruits, Honey, Minerals and *Rikâz*

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 267)

Zakâh can be called spending (expenditure), as Allah, the Exalted, says:

> ***"And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah - give them tidings of a painful punishment."***
> (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 34)

The verse means that they do not give its due *Zakâh*.

The *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) has mentioned elaborately the command to give *Zakâh* on grains and fruits, and clarified its due amount. The Muslims

have also unanimously agreed upon the dueness of giving it from wheat, barley, dates, and raisins. Thus, *Zakâh* is to be given from all grains such as wheat, barley, rice, millet and the rest of cereals. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No Zakâh is due on less than five wasqs*[1] *of grains or dates."*[2]

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

> *"On a land irrigated by rainwater or by natural water channels or if the land is wet due to a nearby water spring, one-tenth is to be given (as Zakâh)."*
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî)[3]

Zakâh is to be given from fruits such as dates, raisins, and their like from amongst all the things that can be weighed and stored. *Zakâh* is only taken from what reaches the *nisâb*. This is based on the *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* narrated by Abû Sa`îd Al-Khudrî (may Allah be pleased with him) saying that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No Zakâh is to be paid on (a quantity) less than five wasqs."*
>
> (Related by the Group of Compilers of Hadîth)[4]

It is stipulated in *Zakâh* given from grains and fruits that the owner must possess the *nisâb* at the due time of giving *Zakâh*, which is the appearance of signs indicating ripeness of fruits, and the hardening of grains in plants. Thus, there are two conditions which make *Zakâh* obligatory to be given from fruits and grains. First, the amount should reach the *nisâb* according to what is mentioned above. Second, the one giving *Zakâh* possesses the *nisâb* at the due time of giving *Zakâh*. Therefore, if a person possesses the *nisâb* later, he is not to give *Zakâh* for it, as in the case of buying it, or gaining it as wages in return of harvesting it, or having picked it up from the leftover harvest.

The amount that is to be given as *Zakâh* of grains and fruits differs according to the method of irrigation:

In case the land is irrigated without effort, but from floods and running water, or in case of trees and plants that suck water through their roots, tenth of the yield is to be given as *Zakâh*. This is according to the *hadîth* related in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* on the authority of Ibn `Umar who narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"On a land irrigated by rainwater or by natural water channels or if the land is wet due to a nearby spring, one-tenth is to be given (as Zakâh)."

Moreover, Imâm Muslim relates on the authority of Jâbir that the Prophet (PBUH) says:

"One-tenth is payable (as Zakâh) on the land irrigated by rivers, or rain."[5]

In case of what is irrigated by exerting effort to bring water from wells or other sources, one-twentieth (5%) is to be given as *Zakâh*. This is based on what the Prophet (PBUH) said in the *hadîth* narrated by Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him):

"...And on the land irrigated by the well, one-twentieth (5%) is to be paid (as Zakâh on the yield of the land)."

(Related by Al-Bukhârî)

Watering by the help of camels entails giving one-twentieth, as Imâm Muslim related on the authority of Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"...And a one-twentieth is to be paid (as Zakâh) on what is irrigated by camels."

The due time of giving *Zakâh* on grains is when they become ripe and hard, and with regard to fruits, the due time is when they show signs of ripeness. Yet, if the owner sells it afterwards, *Zakâh* will still be due upon him, not upon the buyer. In addition, the grains are to be given as *Zakâh* after sifting; that is, they must be cleaned from hay and straw.

The fruits given as *Zakâh* should be dried because the Prophet (PBUH) commanded estimating the grapes (for collecting *Zakâh*) when dried into raisins,[6] thus *Zakâh* for grapes is to be paid in raisins. The same is to be applied with regard to *Zakâh* due upon dates, as it is to be given in dried dates.

Zakâh is to given from honey if it is obtained from one's own possession or from uncultivated lands, like the tops of mountains as long as the honey obtained reaches the *nisâb*. The *nisâb* of honey is thirty *sâ`s*[7]. Thus, it is 65160 grams. The amount to be given as *Zakâh* in honey is a tenth of the yield.

Zakâh is to be given from minerals, according to the Qur'anic verse in which Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...Spend from the good things, which you have earned, and from that which We have produced for you from the earth..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 267)

A mine is a place from where precious stones are extracted. It is a profit from the earth, thus it entails giving *Zakâh* just as grains and fruits. If the mineral is gold or silver, the due amount of *Zakâh* is one-fortieth (2.5%), when it reaches the *nişâb* or exceeds it. Regarding other minerals as kohl, arsenic, sulfur, salt and petroleum, 2.5% of their value is to be given as *Zakâh*, if the value reaches the *nişâb* or exceeds it (after being) evaluated in gold or silver.

Zakâh is also to be given from *rikâz* (buried wealth), which is the buried wealth of the disbelievers from the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*). It is named *rikâz* because it is deeply hidden under the ground, as the word *rikâz*, in Arabic, indicates firmly implanting something into the ground. Fifth of its amount is to be given as *Zakâh* whether it is a small or a large amount, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"One-fifth of the rikâz is to be given to the Public Treasury."

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)[8]

It could be known that *rikâz* belongs to the disbelievers by having their signs on it like the names of their kings, crosses or any other sign that indicates being of non-Muslim origins. So, after the fifth of it is given as *Zakâh*, the rest is to go to the one who has found it. However, if the buried wealth carries any sign indicating the ownership of Muslims, or it carries no sign at all, then it is to be judged by the same rulings on a finding.

What is taken as *Zakâh* from the *rikâz* (buried wealth) is to be spent in the interest of Muslims as in the case of the war booty.

According to the aforementioned, it is clear that *Zakâh* of what is produced from the earth comprises several kinds:

- Grains and fruits
- Minerals with its different kinds
- Honey (which is formed in mountain beehives)
- *Rikâz*

All these kinds fall under what Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...Spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 267)

And the verse:

> ***"...And give its due [Zakâh] on the day of its harvest..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-An`âm: 141)

Zakâh is only obligatory on what is weighed and stored of grains and fruits. As for what is not weighed and stored, it does not entail giving *Zakâh*, like walnut, apple, peach, quince, and pomegranate. The same applies to the rest of vegetables and legumes, like radish, garlic, onion, carrot, watermelon, cucumber, eggplants and the like. This is based on the *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* of `Alî (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No Zakâh is due on vegetables."*
>
> (Related by Ad-Dâraqutnî)[9]

Moreover, Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *"No Zakâh is to be paid on (a quantity) less than five wasqs."*

Thus, measuring is considered in what entails giving *Zakâh*, which indicates that *Zakâh* is not to be given from what is neither measured nor stored. In addition, the fact that the Prophet (PBUH) and his Caliphs used not to collect *Zakâh* for such kinds of plants, though they were cultivated near them, serves as evidence that *Zakâh* is not to be taken from these plants. This means that abstaining from taking *Zakâh* from such plants is the followed *Sunnah*. Imâm Ahmad said:

> *"What resembles cucumber, onion, and basils (in being not measured nor stored) does not entail giving Zakâh, except when it is sold and then a year lapses on its price."*

Endnotes

1 *Wasq*: A standard measure that equals 130320 grams.
2 Muslim (2264) [4/55]. See also Al-Bukhârî (1459) [3/406].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1483) [3/437].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1405) [3/342], Muslim (2260) [4/52], Abû Dâwûd (1558) [2/142], At-Tirmidhî (625) [3/22], An-Nasâ'i (2444) [2/18] and Ibn Mâjah (1793) [2/374].
5 Muslim (2269) [4/57].
6 Abû Dâwûd (1603) [2/175], At-Tirmidhî (643) [3/36], An-Nasâ'î (2617) [3/115] and Ibn Mâjah (1819) [2/390].
7 *Ṣâ`*: A standard measure that equals 2172 grams.
8 Al-Bukhârî (6912) [12/317] and Muslim (444) [6/222].
9 Ad-Dâraquṯnî (1890) [2/81] and At-Tirmidhî (637) [3/30].

Zakâh: Gold and Silver

The rulings on *Zakâh* of gold and silver are also applied with regard to what is derived from them such as money, jewels, ingots and the like.

The proof of the legality of *Zakâh* on gold and silver is the Qur'ân, the *Sunnah*, and the consensus of Muslim scholars. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... Those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah - give them tidings of a painful punishment ..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 34)

In this Noble Qur'anic verse there is a hard warning of painful torture to those who refrain from giving *Zakâh* due on gold and silver.

In the Two Sahîhs, it is related that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If any owner of gold or silver does not pay what is due on him, when the Day of Resurrection comes, it (the gold or the silver) will be turned into plates of fire for him (and he will be punished with them)."*[1]

All Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that what is meant by "hoarding" in the Noble Qur'ân and the *hadîth* is things piled up together whether buried on the face of the earth or not. These things entail giving *Zakâh* but it was not given. If the due *Zakâh* is paid, then it is not considered hoarding.

Zakâh is to be given in gold when it reaches twenty *mithqâls*[2]. Thus, the *nisâb* of gold is 85 grams. With regard to silver, the *nisâb* of silver is 200 dirhams which equals 595 grams of silver,[3] whether these dirhams are coined or not. The due amount of *Zakâh* in gold and silver is one-fortieth (2.5%). This is based on the *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* of Ibn `Umar and `Âishah (may Allah be pleased with them) who said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to take half a dinar[4] as Zakâh from the property that reached twenty dinars and upward."*
> (Related by Ibn Mâjah)[5]

In addition, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"One-fortieth (i.e. 2.5%) is to be taken from pure silver (as Zakâh)."*
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî)[6]

What is Permitted for Men to Wear of Gold and Silver

Men are allowed to wear a silver ring, as the Prophet (PBUH) used to wear a silver ring, and this is related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim[7]. However, men are prohibited from wearing golden rings, as the Prophet (PBUH) prohibited men from adorning themselves with gold[8]. The Prophet (PBUH) expressed a hard warning to the one who does it, by saying:

> *"The one of you takes live coal from the Hellfire and puts it on his hand."*[9]

Yet, men are allowed to wear gold when necessary, like using gold as an artificial nose or in orthodontics. This is because the nose of `Arfajah Ibn As`ad (may Allah be pleased with him) was cut on the Battle of Al-Kulâb (a battle that took place in the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance). So, he used a nose made of silver, but it caused a stench, so the Prophet (PBUH) ordered him to get a gold nose. (Related by Abû Dâwûd and Al-Hâkim who deemed it *sahîh*, i.e. authentic)[10]

What is Permitted for Women to Wear of Gold and Silver

Women are allowed to wear gold and silver in whatever way they are accustomed to, as the Lawgiver permitted adornment to them absolutely. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Gold and silk are made lawful to the females of my nation while made unlawful to the males."*
>
> (Related by A<u>h</u>mad, Abû Dâwûd, At-Tirmidthî and An-Nasâ'î)[11]

This *<u>h</u>adîth* indicates that it is permissible for women to adorn themselves with gold and silver. Moreover, Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed upon this.

No *Zakâh* is to be given from the golden and silver jewelry of women if used for ornaments or lending. This is according to what the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"No Zakâh is due on jewels used for ornament."*[12]
>
> (Related by At-Tabarânî, on the authority of Jâbir, with a weak chain of transmitters)

However, what supports this *<u>h</u>adîth* is the fact that it was adopted and Muslims have acted according to it, and was also adopted by a group of the Prophet's Companions, among whom were: Anas, Jâbir, `Â'ishah, and Asmâ' (`Â'ishah's sister) (may Allah be pleased with them all). **Imâm A<u>h</u>mad** said, *"...This opinion is adopted by five from amongst the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)."*[13] Moreover, using gold for adornment is not an act of investment but a lawful act that resembles wearing a suit, having servants, and possessing houses for dwelling.

If the jewelry is set to be used for the purposes of renting, spending (in case of need), possessing, saving, or is meant for any purposes other than those of using and lending, then it is subject to the original ruling of giving *Zakâh* and *Zakâh* is to be observed in it. This is because gold and silver entail giving *Zakâh*. *Zakâh* is not due on them only when they are used for ornaments and lending. Other than that, the original sum is subject to paying the due *Zakâh* when it reaches the *nisâb*[14] separately, or by adding it to another part of the property. In case the jewelry does not reach the *nisâb*, and it is not possible to add it to another property, then it does not entail giving *Zakâh* except when it is set for trading; in this case, its value is subject to paying *Zakâh*.

The Ruling on Plating Walls and Other Stuff with Gold or Silver and Using Utensils Made of Any of Them

It is prohibited to plate a ceiling or a wall with sliver or gold, or to plate a vehicle or its keys with them. All this is prohibited for a Muslim. It is also prohibited to plate a pen or an inkwell with gold or sliver, because all this is considered signs of extravagance and vanity. Moreover, it is prohibited to use utensils made of gold or silver, or to plate utensils with them. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"He who drinks in a vessel of gold or silver is only filling his abdomen with Hellfire."*

In addition, there is a hard warning to those men who wear golden rings, but regretfully, some Muslim men wear golden rings, paying no heed to the warning, or are ignorant of it. Such men should repent to Allah for wearing golden adornments, and be content with wearing the sliver ring, which Allah has permitted, for doing what is lawful suffices instead of doing what is prohibited. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out - and will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent."*** (Qur'ân: At-Talâq: 2-3)

We ask Allah to grant us all guidance to His Religion, adherence to His Divine Law, and sincerity in worship.

Endnotes

1 Muslim (2287) [4/67]; see also Al-Bukhârî (1402) [3/338].
2 *Mithqâl*: A standard measure that equals 4.25 grams.
3 A dirham of silver equals 2.975 grams of silver.
4 Dinar: An old Arab coin that equals 2.975 grams of gold.
5 Ibn Mâjah (1791) [2/373].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1454) [3/399].
7 Al-Bukhârî (65) [1/205] and Muslim (5447) [7/295].
8 Al-Bukhârî (5863) [10/388].
9 Muslim (2090).

10 Abû Dâwûd (4232) [4/279], At-Tirmidhî (1774) [4/240] and An-Nasâ'î (5176) [4/543].
11 Abû Dâwûd (4057) [4/214], An-Nasâ'î (5159) [4/540] and Ibn Mâjah (3595) [4/157]. See also An-Nasâ'î (5163) [4/540] and At-Tirmidhî (1720) [4/217].
12 Ad-Dâraquṯnî (1937) [2/92]; see also "*Naṣbur-Râyah*" [2/374-375].
13 `Abdur-Razzâq in his "*Muṣannaf*" [4/81-86], Ibn Abû Shaybah in his "*Muṣannaf*" [2/383-384] and Al-Bayhaqî in his "*Sunan*" [4/232-234].
14 *Niṣâb*: The minimum amount upon which *Zakâh* is due.

Zakâh: Trade Goods

Trade goods refer to anything allocated for trading purposes with the aim of making profit. *Zakâh* on trade goods is obligatory according to the Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* and consensus. Allah says:

> ***"Take, [O Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 103)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"And those within whose wealth is a known right. For the petitioner and the deprived..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Ma`ârij: 24-25)

The major part of trade goods constitutes the majority of assets (or property), and that is why they are implied, with greater reason, in the general meanings of the verses related thereof.

Moreover, it is related by Abû Dâwûd on the authority of Samurah who said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) used to order us to pay Zakâh on what we prepare for trade."*[1]

In general, because trade goods are growing money, they entail paying *Zakâh*, just as grazing livestock.

Furthermore, there is more than one narration on the consensus of Muslim scholars on the obligation of paying *Zakâh* by any Muslim who possesses trade goods for a whole lunar year.

In this regard, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** said:

> *"The Four Imâms, together with the entire body of Muslim scholars except few individual scholars, unanimously agree that it is obligatory to give Zakâh on trade goods. This ruling applies to any merchant, whether resident or traveling, a monopolist merchant (the one who buys trade goods at times of price fall and sells them when prices are high) or a shopkeeper. It also applies to any type of goods such as clothes (brand new or second-hand); food (e.g. grains, fruit, and any edible matter); utensils such as pottery and the like; or any types of animals including horses, mules, donkeys, sheep, etc. Generally, while merchandise represents the majority of people's non-observable properties, cattle represent the majority of their observable properties."*[2]

However, *Zakâh* on trade goods becomes obligatory only under the following four conditions:

First: The owner has acquired this property by doing some act such as transactions, gifting, bequeathing, renting, or other means of acquisition.

Second: The owner intends to use trade goods for trade and profit. Since the correctness and rewards of deeds depend upon intentions, so trade, like any other act, is to be associated by an intention.

Third: The value of trade goods must reach the *nisâb* evaluated in gold or silver.

Fourth: A lunar year must lapse upon the *nisâb*, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"No Zakâh is due upon property until one year has passed."

However, if the owner buys trade goods against a monetary currency equal to the *nisâb* or buys them for other trade goods equal to the *nisâb*, the year of the goods possession is to be counted with regard to the property he bought the trade goods with.

The Estimation of *Zakâh* on Trade Goods

Zakâh on trade goods is to be appraised at the completion of the lunar year (when the value of one's trade goods amounts to the *nisâb*) by either gold or silver. When appraising the value of the *nisâb*, it should be appraised according to the value that will be more useful to the poor. Then, fortieth (2.5%) of the value is to be paid, irrespective of any amount of money that has been used for buying trade goods; however, what is to be taken in consideration is the value of trade goods at the completion of the year. This is to observe justice regarding both the merchant and the recipients of *Zakâh*.

A Muslim is to pursue accuracy and scrutiny while reckoning the payable amount of *Zakâh*, simulating in the process the way a miser would reckon with his partner. Thus, all types of trade goods owned by a Muslim must be valued in a just way. A shopkeeper, for instance, is to estimate the value of all kinds of goods he has such as canned foods and the like. Similarly, an automobile or spare-parts seller is to value all his objects. An owner of real estate who has put his property up for sale should likewise value this property and pay *Zakâh* due on it. However, any property set for renting, such as buildings and automobiles, does not entail giving *Zakâh*. Rather, *Zakâh* is due on the revenue if it amounts to the *nisâb* when a complete lunar year passes on it.

Furthermore, houses and automobiles intended for personal usage (i.e. living and transport, respectively) do not entail *Zakâh*. In the same way, house furniture as well as store furnishings and tools of the merchant, such as cubits, measures, scales, perfume vessels and suchlike things, do not entail giving *Zakâh*, as they are not intended for trade.

A Muslim ought to give *Zakâh* wholeheartedly, seeking thereby the Divine reward. A Muslim should also realize that *Zakâh* will bring him gain in this world and in the Hereafter, and he should not regard what he gives as *Zakâh* as a loss by any way. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And among the Bedouins are some who consider what they spend as a loss and await for your turns of misfortune. Upon them will be a misfortune of evil. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing. But among the Bedouins are some who believe in Allah and the Last***

Day and consider what they spend as means of nearness to Allah and of [obtaining] invocations of the Messenger. Unquestionably, it is a means of nearness for them. Allah will admit them to His mercy. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."

(Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 98-99)

Each of the two parties mentioned in the aforementioned Qur'anic verse gives *Zakâh*. Yet, they are treated differently by Allah, according to the intention of each group. The first group includes those who give *Zakâh* considering it a loss and taking it a screen to hide their ill will toward Muslims. They wait for an occasion when Muslims are stricken by misfortunes to take revenge on them. However, upon them will be a misfortune of evil, and they have been deprived of Allah's reward and have lost the money they have given as *Zakâh*. On the other hand, those believers who give *Zakâh* to draw near to Allah indeed will receive a far much valuable reward from Allah in compensation for their good intentions of giving *Zakâh*. In this respect, Allah says:

"...Unquestionably, it is a means of nearness for them. Allah will admit them to His mercy..." (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 99)

All Muslims thus ought to fear Allah and reflect on such sublime meanings as those indicated by the following Qur'anic verse:

"...And loan Allah a goodly loan. And whatever good you put forward for yourselves - you will find it with Allah. It is better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (Qur'ân: Al-Muzzammil: 20)

Endnotes

1 Abû Dâwûd (1562) [2/145].
2 See: "*Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ*" (25/15, 45).

Zakâtul-Fitr (Fast-Breaking *Zakâh*)

Zakâtul-Fitr is an obligatory charity to be paid by the end of Ramadân. Hence, the term is a causative one, as *Fitr* (breaking the fast) is the cause for *Zakâh* to be given. *Zakâtul-Fitr* is obligatory according to the Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* and the consensus of Muslim scholars.

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-A`lâ: 14)

Some of the scholars of the *Salaf* (early Muslim scholars) view that the word 'purifies' in this verse refers to giving *Zakâtul-Fitr*. Moreover, the obligation of giving *Zakâtul-Fitr* is to be understood from the general meaning of the divine command: ***"...and give Zakâh..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 43) Furthermore,

there are many *hadîths* and narrations stating the obligation of *Zakâtul-Fitr*. There is a *hadîth* related in the Two *Sahîhs*[1] and other books of *Hadîth* stating:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) enjoined Zakâtul-Fitr to be paid with one sâ` of dates or one sâ` of barley on every Muslim, free or slave, male or female, young or old."*[2]

In addition, many Muslim scholars have confirmed the unanimous agreement on the obligation of *Zakâtul-Fitr*.

As for the wisdom lying behind the obligation of *Zakâtul-Fitr*, it purifies the Muslim who has performed fasting from any traces of ill speech or obscenity; it provides sustenance for the poor; and it acts as an expression of gratitude to Allah for enabling the Muslim to complete the fast of Ramadân.

Zakâtul-Fitr is obligatory upon every Muslim, male or female, old or young, slave or free, according to the above-mentioned narration on the authority of Ibn `Umar stating:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) enjoined Zakâtul-Fitr to be paid on every Muslim, free or slave, male or female, young or old."*

The previously mentioned narration demonstrates that the quantity of *Zakâh* is to be one *sâ`*. As for its quality, it is to be taken from the ordinary food of the area where *Zakâh* is given, be this food wheat, barley, dates, raisins, cheese, or whatever is considered the ordinary food of the area, such as rice and corn, which may differ from one region to another.

Concerning the time of paying *Zakâtul-Fitr*, the Prophet (PBUH) ordered the people to give it before going to the Feast Prayer[3] and it is more desirable to be given within the time extending between the sunset of the Feast (`*Îd*) Vigil and the Feast Prayer. However, it is permissible to give *Zakâtul-Fitr* one or two days before the Feast Prayer[4]. Imâm Al-Bukhârî (may Allah have mercy on him) has related on the authority of Ibn `Umar that the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) used to give *Zakâtul-Fitr* one or two days before the Feast (`*Îd*) Prayer, which indicates that the Companions have unanimously agreed upon this. Yet, the most desirable time to give *Zakâtul-Fitr* is on the Day of the Feast (`*Îd*), before the Feast Prayer. However, if the Feast Prayer is performed before one gives *Zakâtul-Fitr*, one is still required to make up for it after the Feast Prayer. This is based on the *hadîth* narrated by Ibn `Abbâs that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone pays it (Zakâtul-Fitr) before the Feast Prayer, it will be accepted as Zakâh; and if anyone pays it after prayer, it will be considered a charity like other charities."*[5]

Hence, the Muslim who postpones giving *Zakâtul-Fitr* has committed a sin for violating the Prophet's order.

A Muslim is to give *Zakâtul-Fitr* on behalf of himself as well as on behalf of every person he supports including wives and relatives. This is what can be understood from the general meaning of the *hadîth* in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Give Zakâtul-Fitr on behalf of whomever you support."*[6]

It is even desirable to give Zakâtul-Fitr on behalf of the fetus, as done by 'Uthmân Ibn 'Affân (may Allah be pleased with him)[7].

Furthermore, if the person who is being supported by another one gives *Zakâtul-Fitr* for himself without the permission of his sustainer, this is sufficient for his part, since one is to give it in the first place and one's sustainer is not originally responsible for it. On the other hand, if someone gives *Zakâtul-Fitr* on behalf of another person whom he does not support, this becomes sufficient for that person's part when it is with his permission; otherwise, it becomes insufficient. In addition, if there is a person who sustains another, it is permissible for the former to give *Zakâtul-Fitr* on behalf of the latter along with his own *Zakâtul-Fitr* in the place where he lives, even if the latter lives in another place.

Concerning the type of food that is to be given as *Zakâtul-Fitr*, **Ibnul-Qayyim,** after referring to the five types of food included in the above-mentioned *hadîth* (namely, wheat, barley, dates, raisins and cheese), said:

> *"... These (the five food types) used to be the staple foods in Medina. Thus, people living in a village or city where staple food differs from the above, are to pay one sâ'*[8] *of their own staple food (as Zakâtul-Fitr). Thus, if their staple food is something other than grain, such as milk, meat or fish, they are to give Zakâtul-Fitr thereof, whatever it may be. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars which is regarded as the correct one in this regard, and there should be no other contrary opinions to be followed. This is because Zakâtul-Fitr is legally ordained to support the needy on the Day of the Feast with the same staple food of the people in the same place where they live. Therefore, it is sufficient for the Muslim to give the needy flour as Zakâtul-Fitr though it is not one of the five types of food mentioned*

> *in the hadîth of the Prophet (PBUH) in this regard. Though bread and cooked food can be useful for the needy and cost them little to prepare for eating, grains are likely to be more useful to the needy since grains can last for a longer time."*[9]

With regard to the aforementioned issue, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** said:

> *"... A Muslim is to give Zakâtul-Fitr from the staple food of his area such as rice and the like, even if he is able to give it from the kinds of food stated in the aforementioned hadîth. This opinion is reported to be one of the opinions adopted by Imâm Ahmad, and it is the opinion adopted by the majority of scholars, and it is the soundest view in this regard. This is because the original juristic ruling of giving charities is to support the poor."*[10]

It is not sufficient for a Muslim to give money (that equals the value of the legally prescribed amount of staple food) as *Zakâtul-Fitr*, for this is considered contradictory to the *Sunnah*. Moreover, it is not narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) or any of his Companions gave *Zakâtul-Fitr* in the form of money instead of the staple food.

Imâm Ahmad said, *"A Muslim is not to pay the poor money instead of the prescribed amount of the staple food for Zakâtul-Fitr."* It was said to him, "*`Umar Ibn `Abdul-`Azîz used to accept money for Zakâtul-Fitr.*" **He (Imâm Ahmad)** replied, *"How could they adhere to the sayings of so and so and ignore the hadîths of the Prophet (PBUH) stated in this regard?!"* **Ibn `Umar said,** *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) enjoined Zakâtul-Fitr to be paid with one sâ` ..."*.

Zakâtul-Fitr must be given at its due time to the due recipient entitled to receive *Zakâh* or to his representative. If the giver finds neither the recipient nor his agent, he must give it to another recipient at the due time of *Zakâtul-Fitr*. Concerning this issue, many a Muslim makes a mistake when entrusting *Zakâtul-Fitr* with someone not appointed by the due recipient of *Zakâh*, for this is not considered a legal way of giving *Zakâtul-Fitr*. So, Muslims must pay attention to this matter.

Endnotes

1 The Two *Ṣaḥîḥs*: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
2 Al-Bukhârî (1503) [3/463] and Muslim (2275) [4/60].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1509) [3/472].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1511) [3/473].
5 Abû Dâwûd (1609) [2/179] and Ibn Mâjah (1827) [2/395].
6 Ad-Dâraqutnî (2059) [2/123] and Al-Bayhaqî (7685) [4/272).
7 Ibn Abû Shaybah (10737) [2/432] and `Abdur-Razzâq in his *Muṣannaf* [3/319].
8 *Ṣâ`*: A standard measure that equals 2172 grams.
9 *I`lâm Al-Muwaqqi`în* [2/21] and [3/23].
10 *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [10/410], [25/69], and [22/326].

Giving *Zakâh*

One of the most important rulings on *Zakâh* is to know its legal channels in order to give it to those entitled to receive it and also to absolve the giver from any further responsibility. A Muslim must hasten to give *Zakâh* as soon as it is due on his property, for Allah, Exalted be He, says, ***"...and give Zakâh..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 43) This is a general order which indicates hastening to act accordingly. It is narrated on the authority of `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Zakâh is never mixed with a property but ruins it (i.e. if Zakâh is not paid at its due time)."*[1]

Moreover, the need of the poor necessitates a quick giving of *Zakâh*, as any delay harms them. Also, if the people upon whom *Zakâh* is obligatory delay giving it, they may be subjected to some afflictions such as bankruptcy and death, and thus *Zakâh* will remain as an unfulfilled duty on their liability. So, hastening to give *Zakâh* keeps a Muslim away from miserliness, fulfills his legal

duty, and pleases Allah, Exalted be He. For the aforementioned objectives, a Muslim must hasten to give *Zakâh* due upon him and avoid delaying it except for a legal necessity, such as when the Muslim delays giving *Zakâh* in order to give it to someone who is more entitled to receive it, or he does not have enough money, or the like.

It is obligatory upon the guardian to give *Zakâh* due on the property of a child or a mad person, according to the general meanings of the aforementioned proofs, as it is considered a legal duty that can be fulfilled through a representative.

It is impermissible to give *Zakâh* without intention as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Deeds (their correctness and rewards) depend upon intentions..."*

And giving *Zakâh* is a legal deed.

It is recommended for the owner of a property to distribute the due amounts of his *Zakâh* himself, in order to be sure that it reaches its legally entitled recipients. However, it is permissible for him to appoint someone to distribute it on his behalf. If the *Imâm* (the ruler) of Muslims asks for *Zakâh* or sends his messenger to collect it, he is to give *Zakâh* to that collector. It is desirable for the giver and the recipient of *Zakâh* to invoke Allah (while giving or receiving accordingly). The giver should invoke Allah saying:

> *"O Allah, make it a profit and do not make it a loss."*

The collector should invoke Allah for the giver saying:

> *"May Allah reward you for what you have given, bless your remaining property and make it a means of purification for you!"*

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Take, [O Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them..."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 103)

This verse indicates invoking Allah for those who give *Zakâh*. `Abdullâh Ibn Abû Awfâ (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"When some people brought their Zakâh to Allah's Messenger (PBUH), he used to say, 'O Allah! Confer Your Blessings upon them.' "*[2]

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

If the recipient of *Zakâh* is in bad need and he is one of those who usually take *Zakâh*, the giver should give it to him without pointing out that it is of *Zakâh*, in order not to embarrass him. However, if the one receiving *Zakâh* is in bad need and he is not of those who usually take *Zakâh*, the giver should give it to him, pointing out to him that it is of *Zakâh*. It is recommended for the giver of *Zakâh* to distribute it to the poor people of the same town or village where the property is. Yet, it is permissible to transfer *Zakâh* to another place for a legal interest, such as when the giver has some poor relatives living in another place, or when the poor people living in another place are in need of *Zakâh* more than those in the same place where the property is. This is because the charities used to be transferred to the Prophet (PBUH) in Medina, and he used to distribute them among the poor of the *Muhâjirûn* (Immigrants to Medina) and the *Anṣâr* (the Supporters of the Prophet in Medina).

A Muslim ruler must send the collectors of *Zakâh* a little before the due time of *Zakâh* to take *Zakâh* due on the observable property such as the animals of grazing livestock, crops and fruits, as did by the Prophet (PBUH) and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and the Muslims after them. Since some people do not give *Zakâh* unless they are asked to and others are ignorant of the obligation of *Zakâh* upon them, sending the collectors of *Zakâh* avoids such a danger, lightens difficulties for Muslims, and helps them fulfill their legal obligations.

It is obligatory upon every Muslim (on whom *Zakâh* is due) to give *Zakâh* at its due time without hesitation or delay. It is permissible to give *Zakâh* two years or less before its due time, for the Prophet (PBUH) asked Al-`Abbâs (the Prophet's paternal uncle) to give *Zakâh* due upon him for two years in advance, as related by A̲hmad and Abû Dâwûd[3]. So, it is permissible for those, upon whom *Zakâh* is due, to give it in advance before its due time, whether it is due on cattle, grains, gold and silver, or trade goods when the giver has the *niṣâb*. However, it is recommended not to give *Zakâh* in advance in order to avoid the dispute among scholars (over the permissibility of this act).

Endnotes

1 Al-Bayhaqî (7666) [4/268].
2 Al-Bukhârî (1497) [3/455] and Muslim (2489) [4/183].
3 Abû Dâwûd (1624), At-Tirmidhî (677) [3/63] and Ibn Mâjah (1795) [2/376].

Entitled Recipients of *Zakâh*

A Muslim should know that it is not sufficient to give *Zakâh* except to the categories appointed by Allah in the Noble Qur'ân. Allah, Exalted be He says:

> ***"Zakâh expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [Zakâh] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the Cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler - an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 60)

Thus, the people mentioned in this noble verse are those Allah appointed to be entitled to receive *Zakâh*, and Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that it is impermissible for Muslims to give *Zakâh* to any other people.

Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth* related on the authority of Ziyâd Ibnul-Hârith that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Allah, Exalted be He, did not take the judgment of a prophet or any other person concerning Zakâh but He judged according to it and divided it (Zakâh) into eight kinds (of people who deserve receiving it)."[1]

In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) said to the one who asked him in the previous hadîth:

"If you are (one) of these kinds (that deserve receiving Zakâh), I will give you your right."[2]

When some hypocrites criticized the Prophet (PBUH) concerning the distribution of *Zakâh*, Allah, Exalted be He, illustrated that He was the One Who distributed *Zakâh* and pointed out the rulings thereof, and that He did not appoint anyone to distribute them instead[3].

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"It is obligatory to give Zakâh to all the eight categories of people (illustrated in the Noble Qur'ân); otherwise, it is to be given to the available categories and transferred to wherever they live[4]*. Zakâh must not be given to whoever does not use it to obey Allah, for Allah ordains Zakâh for the believers entitled to it, such as the poor and the debtors, to help them obey Him, and for those Muslims who help the believers. Of those entitled to Zakâh, whoever does not perform prayer must not be given anything until he repents and performs prayer at its due times."*[5]

It is impermissible to spend *Zakâh* in channels of spending other than those appointed by Allah, such as charitable projects like building mosques or schools, as Allah, says:

"Zakâh expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy..."

(Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 60)

The verse indicates that *Zakâh* is not to be spent in any channel other than those mentioned in the verse, as it must be given to these eight categories in particular. Allah has specified these eight categories entitled to receive *Zakâh* in order to inform Muslims that *Zakâh* is not to be given to other than them. These eight categories fall under two groups: the needy Muslims and those who support Islam when receiving *Zakâh*. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"Zakâh expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [Zakâh] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the Cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler - an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise." (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 60)

In this noble verse, Allah mentions all the categories of people entitled to take *Zakâh*, and illustrates that *Zakâh* is not to be given to other than them. These categories are eight.

The first category is the poor who need *Zakâh* more than the needy, as Allah mentions them first, and He starts with the most important categories respectively. The poor are those who do not have what is enough for their living and are not able to earn their living, or those who have only some of their needs to maintain life. So, they are to take from *Zakâh* what suffices all their needs when they have nothing or what satisfies the rest of their needs if they have only some of what satisfies these needs over a whole year.

The second category is the needy who are in better condition than the poor. The needy are those who have most or half their needs. So, they are to be given of *Zakâh* the rest of their needs to suffice them for a whole year.

The third category involves those employed to collect *Zakâh*. Those people collect *Zakâh* from its givers, keep it and then distribute it among those entitled to take it, according to the orders of the Muslims' ruler. They are to be given from *Zakâh* in return for the effort they exert, except when those in authority already give them salaries from the Public Treasury of Muslims in return for their work, as is the case nowadays. The government gives salaries to the workers employed to collect *Zakâh*, and thus it is prohibited for them to take from *Zakâh* any more, since they are already paid for their work from another source.

The fourth category is those given *Zakâh* to bring their hearts together for Islam. Those people fall under two subcategories: disbelievers and Muslims. The disbeliever is to be given from *Zakâh* if he is expected to embrace Islam, in order to make him more willing to embrace Islam. A disbeliever may also be given from *Zakâh* in order to withhold his evil from Muslims. The Muslim can be given from *Zakâh* to strengthen his faith or to make his peer of the non-Muslims embrace Islam, or for any other sound and lawful reasons that benefit the Muslims. Such

people are to be given only when necessary, for `Umar Ibnul-Khaṯṯâb, `Uthmân Ibn `Affân, and `Alî Ibn Abû Ṯâlib (may Allah be pleased with them all) stopped giving those people *Zakâh*, when there was no necessity to give them[6].

The fifth category involves the slaves indebted to get their freedom and who cannot pay their debts. In this case, such a slave is to be given what makes him able to pay his debt in order to have freedom. It is permissible for the Muslim to buy a slave with the money of his *Zakâh* and emancipate him, and it is also permissible for him to pay the ransom of a Muslim captive from the money he has assigned for *Zakâh*, for such an act leads to emancipating Muslim captives.

The sixth category involves those in debt, and they fall under two subcategories. ***The first subcategory*** is the person who has fallen into debts for the sake of others in order to amend matters of difference among people. For example, when two tribes or villages provoke the hostility of one another because of bloodshed or over properties, a person can mediate to reconcile them by taking into his liability the compensation due upon some of them in order to end the dispute. Such an act is a good deed, so it is legal to pay his debt from *Zakâh* for fear that this compensation may cause damage to his property. In addition, helping such a person may encourage others to follow his good example in ending the disputes and uprooting corruption. Moreover, the Lawgiver permits the person indebted for such a reason to ask for the help from others in order to fulfill his noble objective. It is related in *Sa<u>h</u>î<u>h</u> Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of <u>H</u>adîth)* on the authority of Qabîsah that he said to the Prophet (PBUH):

"I have taken upon myself a compensation to settle the dispute between some people and the Prophet (PBUH) said to me, 'Wait until we receive Zakâh, so that we order to give you from it.' "[7]

The second subcategory of those in debt is the person who becomes indebted for his own sake. For example, a person may want to ransom himself from the disbelievers or become indebted and cannot pay it back. In such cases, he is to be given from *Zakâh* to pay back his debts, as Allah, says, ***"...And for those in debt..."*** (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 60)

The seventh category is that spent in the Cause of Allah such as that given to warriors who volunteer in fighting for the Cause of Allah and they do not take salaries from the Public Treasury of Muslims.

Generally, the phrase *"the Cause of Allah"* refers to the war against the enemies of Muslims, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His Cause..."
(Qur'ân: As-Saff: 4)

And He also says:

"Fight in the Way of Allah..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 190)

The eighth category is the stranded traveler. He is a traveler who loses or runs out of his provisions and becomes stranded before completing his journey. The stranded traveler is given from *Zakâh* what enables him to reach his homeland. If he is on his way to a place, he is to be given what enables him to reach this destination and then to return home. The guest is considered a stranded traveler according to the opinion of Ibn `Abbâs and others. If some of the money of *Zakâh* given to the stranded traveler, the fighter in the Cause of Allah, the debtor, or the slave indebted to have his freedom, remains after fulfilling the aim he has taken the money for, then this remaining property must be given back. This is because each of them does not absolutely possess what is given to him from *Zakâh*. Rather, his temporary possession is conditional on his need. Thus, when the reason making him entitled to take *Zakâh* is over, he does not deserve taking *Zakâh* any more.

One should know that it is permissible to spend the whole amount of *Zakâh* on only one of the aforementioned eight categories of the entitled recipients of *Zakâh*, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...But if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 271)

Another proof is the *hadîth* narrated on the authority of Mu`âdh Ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet (PBUH) sent him to Yemen and said to him:

"...Tell them that Allah has made it obligatory for them to pay Zakâh from their property and it is to be taken from the wealthy among them and given to the poor."

(Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

In the previously mentioned verse and *hadîth*, only one of the eight categories of people entitled to take *Zakâh* is mentioned, which indicates that

it is permissible to give the whole amount of *Zakâh* to only one of the eight categories.

It is sufficient for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to only one person entitled to take it, for the Prophet (PBUH) ordered Banû (the family of) Zurayq to give *Zakâh* due upon them to Salamah Ibn Sakhr, according to the *hadîth* related by Imâm Ahmad[8]. Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) said to Qabîsah:

> *"Wait until we receive Zakâh, so that we order to give you from it."*

These two *hadîths* indicate the permissibility of giving one's *Zakâh* to only one of the eight categories entitled to take it.

Moreover, it is permissible for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to his close relatives who are entitled to take it as long as they are not among those whom he is legally required to maintain. With regard to this, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Giving charity to the poor is to be recorded as a charity (in reward) and giving it to one's kinship is to be recorded as two (rewards): a charity and an act of maintaining the ties of kinship."*[9]
>
> (Related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth* and deemed a *hasan* (good) *hadîth* by At-Tirmidhî)

Furthermore, it is impermissible for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to Banû Hâshim (the tribe of the Prophet (PBUH)) including the family of Al-`Abbâs, the family of `Alî, the family of Ja`far, the family of `Aqîl, the family Al-Hârith Ibn `Abdul-Muttalib, and the family of Abû Lahab. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Charity must not be given to the family of Muhammad; for it is only (like) people's impurities (as it is a means of purifying people's wealth and sins)."*[10]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)

In addition, it is impermissible for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to a poor woman married to a rich man who maintains her, nor to a poor man who has a rich relative maintaining him, as each of the two is in no need of *Zakâh* due to the one who maintains her or him respectively. Also, it is impermissible for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to his relatives if they are among those whom he is legally required to maintain. However, the giver of *Zakâh* is permitted to give from it to whomever he volunteers to maintain. It is related in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that the wife of `Abdullâh Ibn Mas`ûd asked the Prophet (PBUH) whether it is permissible to give her *Zakâh*

to the children of her brother, as they were orphans whom she maintained. The Prophet (PBUH) said to her, *"Yes, (give them)."*[11] However, it is impermissible for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to his parents and his agnate ancestors or descendants (children and grandchildren). It is impermissible also for the giver of *Zakâh* to give it to his wife, for he is to maintain her and she is not entitled to take *Zakâh*.

The Muslim must make sure he gives his *Zakâh* to those legally entitled to take it. If he is deceived and gives his *Zakâh* to whomever is not entitled to it, and then he discovers the truth, what he has given is legally not sufficient for him; thus, he must give the same amount to someone entitled to *Zakâh*. Nevertheless, if he does not discover the truth, his giving *Zakâh* to those not entitled to it is legally sufficient for him. This is because two men came to the Prophet (PBUH) asking to take from *Zakâh*, so he looked at them and saw that they were strong. Thereupon, he said to them:

> *"If you wish, I shall give you from it (i.e. Zakâh), but it is not to be given to a rich person nor to one who is strong and able to earn a living."*[12]

Endnotes

1 Abû Dâwûd (1630) [2/192].
2 Abû Dâwûd.
3 See Al-Hâfiz As-Siyûti in his "*Lubab An-Nuqûl fi Asbâb An-Nuzûl.*"
4 See "*Al-Ikhtiyârât*" (p.154).
5 See "*Al-Ikhtiyârât*" (p.154).
6 Al-Bayhaqî (13189) [7/32], see "*Nasbur-Râyah*" [2/394-395].
7 Muslim (2401) [4/134).
8 Ahmad (16373) [4/37] and Abû Dâwûd (2213) [2/458- 460].
9 Abû Dâwûd (2355), At-Tirmidhî (657) [3/46], An-Nasâ'î (2581) [3/96], Ibn Mâjah (1844) [2/44] and Al-Hâkim (1477) [1/563].
10 Muslim (2478) [4/176].
11 Ibn Mâjah (1835) [2/399].
12 Abû Dâwûd (1633) [2/195] and An-Nasâ'î (2597) [3/104].

Desirable Charity

Besides the obligatory *Zakâh*, there is a desirable charity valid to be given any time due to the general invitation to give charities as Allah urges Muslims in many verses of His Noble Qur'ân. Describing the manners of righteous people, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And give wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing s laves..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 177)

He also says:

> ***"...But if you give [from your right as] charity, then it is better for you, if you only knew."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 280)

Moreover, He says:

> ***"Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over?"*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 245)

Furthermore, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"(Giving) charity appeases the Wrath of the Lord and averts an evil death."[1]

(Related by At-Tirmidhî who deems it *hasan*)

It is also related in the Two *Sahîhs* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Allah will give shade to seven on the Day when there will be no shade but His..."

The Prophet (PBUH) mentioned from these seven kinds of people

"...a person who gives to charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given (i.e. nobody knows what he has given in charity)."[2]

There are so many *hadîths* narrated in this respect.

It is recommended to give charity secretly, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...But if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you ..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 271)

That is because this makes the giver far from ostentation, unless giving charity in public exhorts people to follow his good example. The giver of charity must be willing to give, and he must not consider his donations as a favor to whomever needs them, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of it] or injury..." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 264)

In addition, it is recommended for the Muslim to give charities when he is healthy. The Prophet (PBUH) was asked:

"Which charity begets the greatest reward?" He (PBUH) replied, "The charity which you give while you are healthy, niggardly and afraid of poverty and wishing to become wealthy."[3]

Moreover, it is recommended for the Muslim to give charities in the Two Sacred Mosques, for Allah, the Exalted, orders Muslims to give charities there as He says:

"...So eat of them and feed the miserable and poor."

(Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 28)

It is also highly recommended to give charities during the month of Ramaḏân, as Ibn `Abbâs said:

"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) was the most generous of all the people and he used to reach the peak in generosity in the month of Ramaḏân when Jibrîl (Gabriel) met him. Jibrîl used to meet him every night of Ramaḏân (to teach him the Qur'ân). Allah's Messenger (PBUH) was the most generous person, even more generous than the strong uncontrollable wind (in readiness and haste to do charitable deeds)."[4]

It is better for the Muslim to give charities at the times when one needs them as Allah, the Exalted, says:

"Or feeding on a day of severe hunger, an orphan of near relationship, or a needy person in misery..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Balad: 14-16)

It is recommended for the Muslim to give charities to his relatives and neighbors rather than other people, for Allah enjoined upon the Muslim to do goodness to his relatives; He showed in many noble verses that one's relatives have rights upon one. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...And give the relative his right..." (Qur'ân: Al-Isrâ': 26)

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Giving charity to the poor is to be recorded as a charity (in reward) and giving it to one's kinship is to be recorded as two (rewards): a charity and an act of maintaining the ties of kinship."

(Related by the Five Compilers of *H̱adîth* and other compilers)

In the Two *Saẖîẖ*s, the same *ẖadîth* is related with a slightly different wording as:

"... Two rewards: A reward for maintaining the ties of kinship and a reward for giving charity."[5]

The Muslim should know that there are legal rights due on the property of a Muslim other than *Zakâh*. Examples of such rights are supporting the relatives, keeping good relations with friends, giving the needy, granting a delay to the insolvent debtor, and lending those in need, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And from their properties was [given] the right of the [needy] petitioner and the deprived." (Qur'ân: Adh-Dhâriyât: 19)

It is obligatory to feed the hungry, entertain the guest, clothe those who have nothing to clothe themselves, and give drink to the thirsty people. Moreover, Imâm Mâlik (may Allah have mercy on him) maintains that it is obligatory upon the Muslims to ransom the Muslim captives even if this costs them all their properties.

When a Muslim gets money in the presence of the poor or the needy, it is desirable for him to give charities to them from this money, for Allah, the Exalted, says:

"...And give its due [Zakâh] on the day of its harvest..."

(Qur'ân: Al-An'âm: 141)

And:

"And when [other] relatives and orphans and the needy are present at the [time of] division, then provide for them [something] out of it [i.e. the estate] and speak to them words of appropriate kindness." (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 8)

Giving charities is one of the numerous merits of Islam, for it is the religion of consolation, mercy, cooperation, and brotherhood for the Sake of Allah. What a beautiful religion Islam is! How wise the *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law) is! We ask Allah to grant us discernment in our religion, and help us adhere to His *Sharî'ah*, for He is Hearing and Responsive (to supplications).

Endnotes

1 At-Tirmidhî (663) [3/52].
2 Al-Bukhârî (660) [2/186] and Muslim (2377) [4/122].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1419) [3/359] and Muslim (2379) [4/124].
4 Al-Bukhârî (6/1902) [1/41] and Muslim (2308).
5 Al-Bukhârî (1466) [3/413] and Muslim (2315) [4/87].

IV: FASTING

Fasting Ramadân: Obligation and Timing

Fasting the month of Ramadân is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is taken for granted to be one of the obligations ordained by Allah. The obligation of fasting Ramadân is proved in the Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) and the consensus of Muslim scholars. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 183)

Allah, Exalted be He, then says:

> ***"The month of Ramadân [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'ân, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

Thus, fasting Ramadân is "decreed," i.e. enjoined by Allah upon Muslims. The obligation of fasting Ramadân is also illustrated in the imperative form of the verse, ***"... So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it..."***, which is a clear Divine command.

As for the proofs stated in the *Sunnah*, the Prophet (PBUH) said, *"Islam is based on five (pillars)..."*, mentioning *"fasting the month of Ramadân"* as one of them. In addition, there are numerous well-known *hadîths* stating the obligation of fasting Ramadân and enumerating its virtues. Furthermore, Muslim scholars uniformly agree on its obligation, maintaining that whoever denies it is considered a disbeliever.

The Divine wisdom behind the decree of fasting is that it involves purification of the human soul from immorality and vice, for fasting blocks the evil ways of Satan, as Satan circulates in one's body just like the circulation of blood. Whenever one eats or drinks, one's soul becomes vulnerable to succumb to one's desires, its will weakens, and one becomes more reluctant toward worship, which will not be the case when one is in a state of fasting. Moreover, fasting induces the renunciation of worldly pleasures and personal desires and draws a Muslim's attention to the Hereafter. Furthermore, fasting makes one sympathize with the poor and the needy and feel their suffering due to the hardship of the hunger and thirst one experiences during fasting.

According to *Sharî`ah* (Islamic law), fasting means abstaining from certain acts, such as eating, drinking, having sexual intercourse (with one's spouse), committing immoralities, and all the other acts a fasting person is prohibited to do as stated in the *Sharî`ah*, which will be elaborated on later, Allah willing.

The prescribed time for daily fasting begins from daybreak, namely the manifest whiteness in the horizon, and ends at the time of sunset. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...So now, have relations with them [i.e. your wives] and seek that which Allah has decreed for you [i.e. offspring]. And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the night [i.e. sunset]..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 187)

The phrase ***"the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]..."*** shows that fasting begins when the whiteness of the day (daybreak) becomes distinct from the blackness of the night.

The obligatory time of fasting the month of Ramadân begins when the beginning of the month is known. There are three ways by which one can know about it:

Seeing the new moon of the month, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Start fasting on seeing it (i.e. the new moon of Ramadân)."*[1]

Thus, whoever sees the new moon of the month of Ramadân by himself is obliged to fast it.

Being informed of the appearance of the new moon of the month by a just, trustworthy, legally accountable person. To illustrate, Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"The people were looking for the new moon (of Ramadân). When I informed Allah's Messenger (PBUH) that I had sighted it, he (PBUH) observed fasting and commanded the people to fast."*[2]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth*, and deemed a *sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth* by Ibn Hibbân and Al-Hâkim)

The completion of the month of Sha`bân (the month preceding Ramadân) as thirty days. This way is to be applied when the new moon is invisible on the thirtieth night of Sha`bân though there is nothing to block vision such as clouds, rain, or the like. In this regard, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The (lunar) month (can be) twenty-nine nights (i.e. days), so do not fast until you see the new moon and do not break fasting until you see it. And if the sky is overcast, then you have to estimate the period (i.e. to complete Sha`bân as thirty days)."*[3]

This is confirmed by the *hadîth* narrated by Abû Hurayrah in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"... And if the sky is overcast (and you cannot see the new moon), complete Sha`bân as thirty days."*[4]

Fasting the month of Ramadân is obligatory upon every legally accountable Muslim. So, a disbeliever is not obligated to observe fasting, and if he does, it will not be accepted from him. However, if a disbeliever repents and converts

to Islam during the month of Ramadân, he is to fast the rest of the month without being obliged to make up for the days he has missed as a disbeliever. Moreover, fasting Ramadân is not obligatory upon children, yet it is valid if observed by a discriminating child and it will be regarded as a supererogatory act (of worship) for him/her. Furthermore, fasting Ramadân is not obligatory upon the insane, and if a person observes it while being in the state of insanity, it will be void due to the lack of intention. In addition, fasting Ramadân at its prescribed time is neither obligatory upon one afflicted with an illness preventing him from observing it nor upon the one on a journey. Both are to make up for it when the legal excuse, illness or traveling, is over, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...So whoever among you is ill or on a journey [during them] - then an equal number of days [are to be made up]..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 184)

The obligation of fasting is directed to both residents and travelers, healthy and ill people, ritually pure or impure people (such as menstruating women and women in postanatal bleeding period), and those in a state of unconsciousness; all of them are accountable for the obligation of fasting. They are commanded to observe it so as to be aware that it is obligatory upon them and that it has to be observed whether at its due time or later in the case of a legal excuse. It is obligatory upon some of them to perform it at its prescribed time, namely healthy and resident people, excluding menstruating women and women in a state of postnatal bleeding. Others are only obliged to make up for it later, namely menstruating women and women in a state of postnatal bleeding, and those who are too ill to observe it at its due time and can observe it later. However, there are some who may choose either, whether to observe it at its prescribed time or later, such as travelers and ill people who can observe fasting with difficulty but without causing them harm.

As for one who breaks fasting during Ramadân due to a legal excuse and then the excuse is over – such as a traveler who returns back, a menstruating woman or a woman in a state of postnatal bleeding who becomes ritually pure, a disbeliever who converts to Islam, an insane person who regains sanity, and a child who reaches puberty – they are to observe fasting for the rest of the day (if the excuse is over in the daytime) and to make up for that day afterwards. Similarly, if people are informed in the daytime (or after daybreak) that the month of Ramadân has already begun, they are to observe fasting for the rest of the day and then to make up for that day later after Ramadân.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (1909) and Muslim (1081/19).
2 Abû Dâwûd (2342) [2/524], Ibn Hibbân (3447) [8/231], Al-Hakim (1541) [1/585] and Ad-Dâraqutnî (2127)[3/137].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1907) [4/153] and Muslim (2499).
4 Al-Bukhârî (1909) [4/154] and Muslim (2516) [4/193].

Beginning and End of a Fasting Day

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> *"It has been made permissible for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]. They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them. Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you. So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allah has decreed for you [i.e. offspring]. And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the night [i.e. sunset]..."* (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 187)

In this connection, **Imâm Ibn Kathîr** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"This is a legal permission granted by Allah, Exalted be He, to the

Muslims so as to relieve them from the restrictions they were burdened with at the beginning of Islam. To illustrate, at the early stage of Islam, when the fasting day was over and Muslims broke their fast, a Muslim was allowed to enjoy eating, drinking, and having sexual intercourse with his wife only until the time of the 'Ishâ' (Night) Prayer was due, or until he slept before that time. At that time, if a Muslim slept after fast breaking or performed the 'Ishâ' Prayer, he was prohibited to eat, drink, or have sexual intercourse until the fast breaking of the following day. Thus, the Muslims experienced great difficulty in fasting until the aforementioned verse was revealed. The revelation of this verse caused them great happiness, as they were permitted by Allah to eat, drink, and have sexual intercourse at any time of the night until daybreak; until the white thread of dawn became distinct from the black thread of night."[1]

The aforesaid verse states the prescribed time for daily fasting; it begins from daybreak until sunset. The permissibility of eating and drinking until dawn indicates the desirability of having *sahûr* (pre-dawn meal) during Ramadân. It is stated in the Two Sahîhs that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Take sahûr (pre-dawn meal) for there is a blessing in sahûr."[2]

There are also many traditions indicating the desirability of having *sahûr* even if by drinking some water. It is desirable to delay *Sahûr* and to have it shortly before dawn. In this regard, if a man gets up shortly before dawn and finds out that he is in a state of *janâbah* (i.e. major ritual impurity), or a menstruating woman finds that her menses is over, they are to start having *sahûr* and observe fasting, delaying ritual bathing until dawn breaks. As for those who are used to having their *sahûr* (pre-dawn meal) too early, because they stay up late at night and then have *sahûr* and sleep some hours before dawn, they are committing many mistakes:

First: They would start fasting before its due time.

Second: They would not observe the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer in congregation, disobeying Allah by abandoning the obligatory congregational prayer.

Third: They may delay performing the *Fajr* Prayer after its prescribed time and perform it after sunrise, which is regarded as a grave sin and an enormous transgression; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"So woe to those who pray - [but] who are heedless of their prayer."

(Qur'ân: Al-Mâ`ûn: 4-5)

A Muslim must have the intention of observing the obligatory fasting from the night of the day before. However, if a Muslim intends fasting before he sleeps, then he wakes up after daybreak, he is to continue fasting from the moment he wakes up, and it will be valid and complete, Allah willing.

It is desirable to hasten fast breaking if sunset is verified whether by sight, being informed by a trustworthy person, or by hearing the prayer call, or anything of the kind. Sahl Ibn Sa`d (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The people will remain on the right path as long as they hasten breaking of the fast."*[3]

The Prophet (PBUH) also said in a *Qudsî* (Divine) *hadîth*, quoting the Words of his Lord, Almighty and Ever-Majestic be He:

> *"The most beloved of My servants to Me are those who hasten to break fasting (as soon as they are sure of the sunset)."*[4]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

It is an act of the *Sunnah* to break one's fast with eating some ripe dates. If the fasting person does not find any, one may eat dry dates, and if one does not find any, one may break one's fasting with some water. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) used to break his fast before performing the (Sunset) Prayer with some ripe dates; but if there were no fresh dates, he would eat a few dry dates, and if there were no dry dates, he would take some mouthfuls of water."*[5]
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, and At-Tirmidhî)

If there are not any ripe or dry dates or water, the fasting person may break his fast with whatever is available of food and beverage.

There is a very important issue to highlight here; some Muslims break their fast and keep over dining tables until they finish having the

fast breaking meal, missing performing the *Maghrib* (Sunset) Prayer in congregation at the mosque. They thus commit a grave sin, for they abandon performing an obligatory prayer in congregation, miss a great reward, and expose themselves to Divine punishment. A Muslim should rather break his fast first, then head for the mosque to perform the *Maghrib* Prayer in congregation, and then he may have his fast breaking meal when he comes back.

It is desirable for the fasting person when breaking his fast to invoke Allah supplicating Him for whatever he likes. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Verily, a fasting person has an invocation when breaking his fast that is not rejected (by Allah)."*[6]

Among the invocations narrated to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH) upon fast breaking is:

> *"O Allah! For You I have fasted, and with Your provision I have broken my fast."*[7]

Moreover, whenever he (PBUH) broke his fast he used to say:

> *"Thirst has gone, the arteries have become moist, and the reward has become certain, if Allah wills."*[8]

In fact, a Muslim should know about the rulings related to fasting and fast breaking in terms of both the correct time and manner of performance, so as to observe it in the proper, legal way that agrees with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (PBUH). In this way – by following in the Prophet's footsteps when observing fasting – one's fasting is likely to be valid and one's good deeds during fasting are likely to be accepted if Allah wills; this is a very important issue. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the last day and [who] remembers Allah often."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Ahzâb: 21)

Endnotes

1 See Ibn Kathîr in his book on *Tafsîr* (1/288—290).
2 Al-Bukhârî (1923) [4/178] and Muslim (2544) [4/406].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1957) [4/253] and Muslim (2549) [4/208].
4 At-Tirmidhî (699) [3/83].
5 Ahmad (12612) [3/164], Abû Dâwûd (2356) [2/531] and At-Tirmidhî (695) [3/79].
6 Ibn Mâjah (1753) [2/350].
7 Abû Dâwûd (2358) [2/531].
8 Abû Dâwûd (2357) [2/531].

Things Nullifying Fasting

There are things which nullify fasting that a Muslim should know so as to avoid and beware of, for they invalidate fasting and make it void. Among these things are:

1- Having Sexual Intercourse

If a fasting person has sexual intercourse with his wife, his fasting will be nullified, and he will be obliged to make up for that day, on which he had such a sexual intercourse. Moreover, one is not only obliged to make up for such a day, but also to expiate for it. The expiation for such an act is emancipating a slave,[1] and if one does not find a slave to emancipate, one is to fast for two months consecutively, and the one unable to fast them due to a legal excuse should then feed sixty poor persons with half a *ṣâ'* of the country's staple food for each.

2- Ejaculation

Ejaculation nullifies fasting when it results from kissing, touching, masturbating, or lustful gazing. If any of such cases occurs, fasting is nullified, yet one is just obliged to make up for it without expiation, for expiation of nullified fasting is restricted to having sexual intercourse. However, if a sleeping person has had a wet dream, there will be no blame on him and his fasting remains valid, for a wet dream happens involuntarily. Still, one in this case is to perform ritual bathing to purify oneself from the state *janâbah* (i.e. major ritual impurity related to sexual discharge).

3- Deliberate Eating or Drinking

Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the night [i.e. sunset]..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 187)

As for a fasting person who forgetfully eats or drinks, the validity of his fasting is by no means affected. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever eats or drinks something forgetfully while he is fasting, should complete his fast, for what he has eaten or drunk has been given to him by Allah."*[2]

Among the things nullifying fasting is when water or the like gets into one's body (the throat and then the abdomen) through the nostrils, which, in Arabic, is generally referred to as snuff. Moreover, having nutrition through the veins, blood transfusion, and the like, are among the things nullifying fasting, as they provide the body with nutriment. In addition, nutrient injection of a fasting person nullifies his fasting, as it is considered a substitute for food. As for the non-nutrient injections, they have to be avoided as well during fasting to preserve its validity; the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Avoid that which makes you doubt and adhere to that which does not make you doubt."*[3]

So, one should delay such injections until the night (i.e. after fast breaking).

4- Getting out Blood from the Body

Getting out blood of one's body deliberately during fasting, as in cupping, phlebotomy, blood transfusion (to save a patient), nullifies one's fasting. However,

the coming out of a little blood, such as a sample for a blood test, does not affect the validity of one's fasting. Similarly, the involuntary coming out of blood, such as that resulting from nosebleed, a wound, or pulling out a tooth, does not affect fasting.

5- Vomiting

Intentional disgorging of what is in one's stomach, such as vomited foods and drinks, through the mouth nullifies one's fasting. Yet, if one vomits unintentionally, this does not affect one's fasting, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone cannot help vomiting, he does not have to make up for (that day of fasting), and whoever intentionally vomits, should make up for it."*[4]

A fasting person should avoid using eyeliners, eye drops, or the like, to preserve the validity of his/her fasting. Furthermore, a fasting person should not exceedingly rinse out one's mouth and nose with water (during ablution for example), as water may enter one's throat. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Take water into your nostrils well (during ablution) except when you are fasting."*[5]

As for using the *siwâk* (tooth-stick), it does not affect the validity of one's fasting. Rather, using the *siwâk* is desirable and advisable, whether one is fasting or not, at the beginning and end of the day, according to the soundest opinion in this regard. In addition, if dust or a fly enters the mouth of a fasting person, it does not affect the validity of his fasting.

There are certain matters that a fasting person should avoid, such as lying, backbiting, and insulting, and if anyone insults him, his reply should be, *"I am in a state of fasting)."* Unfortunately, there are some people for whom abstaining from food and beverage is much easier than refraining from the evil words and deeds they are accustomed to. That was why one of the *Salaf* (early Muslim scholars) said, *"The easiest part of fasting is abstaining from food and drink."*

So, a fasting person should fear Allah and realize His Might and Magnificence at all times and in all circumstances, preserving his fasting and avoiding the things that nullify it, so as to ensure its validity and acceptability. Furthermore, a fasting person should keep on remembering Allah, reciting the Qur'ân, and performing as many supererogatory acts of worship as possible. The *Salaf*, for example, used to keep to mosques while fasting so as to preserve their fasting and avoid backbiting, as they used to say. In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever does not give up evil speech and related deeds, Allah is in no need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting)."*[6]

This is because seeking Allah's pleasure and drawing near to Him through abstaining from lawful desires (during fasting) must be preceded by general abstaining from unlawful ones, such as lying, oppression, and aggression against people's lives, properties, and honor. It was narrated on the authority of Abû Hurayrah, as a *marfû* ' (traceable) *hadîth*, that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"The fasting person is in a state of worship as long as he does not backbite or hurt a Muslim."*[7]

Moreover, it was narrated on the authority of Anas that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"He does not observe fasting who continues eating the flesh of people (through backbiting them)."*[8]

In a word, since a fasting person abstains from things unlawful only during fasting, he should, with greater reason, abstain from the things which are unlawful at all times, so as to be among the true observers of fasting.

Endnotes

1 That used to be applied at the time of slavery.
2 Al-Bukhârî (6669) [11/669] and Muslim (2709) [4/277].
3 Ahmâd (1723) [1/200], At-Tirmidhî (2523) [4/668], An-Nasâ'î (5727) [4/732] and Al-Hakim (2216) [2/13], (7128) [4/99].
4 Abû Dâwûd (2380) [2/539], At-Tirmidhî (719) [3/98] and Ibn Mâjah (676) [2/315].
5 Abû Dâwûd (142) [1/75], At-Tirmidhî (787) [3/155], An-Nasâ'î (87) [1/70] and Ibn Mâjah (407) [1/246].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1903) [4/150].
7 Ad-Daylamî in *"Musnad Al-Firdaws"*, Ibn 'Adî in *"Al-Kâmil"* [1/302], and Ibn Abû Shaybah (8889) [2/273].
8 Ibn Abû Shaybah (8890) [2/273].

Making up for Missed Days of Ramadân

One may break one's fasting during the month of Ramadân due to a legal excuse, and may do so for an illegal excuse such as having sexual intercourse during fasting or the like. In both cases, it is obligatory for one to make up for the missed day(s) of fasting, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"...then an equal number of days [are to be made up]..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 184)

It is desirable for one to hasten to make up for the missed fasting days of Ramadân so as not to be accountable for it. It is also desirable to make up for the missed days of fasting consecutively, just as the actual days are fasted consecutively.

Moreover, it is permissible for one to delay making up for fasting, as its compensation time is flexible. In other words, every obligation that does not

demand a specific time is permitted to be delayed but with the intention of making up for it. In addition, it is permissible to make up for it separately, i.e. to make up for the fast on separate days, not successive ones.

On the other hand, if it is the month of Sha`bân of the following year, and there are unperformed fasting days of the previous Ramadân – provided the remaining days of Sha`bân are only enough for making up for those unperformed fasting days of Ramadân – one in this case has to make up for them successively. One is to make up for fasting consecutively, due to the limited time one has. However, it is impermissible to delay making up for fasting until after the following Ramadân without a legal excuse, as `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

> *"It could happen that I miss some days of Ramadân (because of a legal excuse), but could not make up for them except in the month of Sha`bân to observe the duties of Allah's Messenger (as a husband)."*[1]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

This signifies that the time of making up for the unperformed fasting days of Ramadân is extensive until the remaining days of Sha`bân are only enough to make up for them. Therefore, it is obligatory for one to make up for them before the following Ramadân begins.

If one delays making up for the missed fasting days of Ramadân until the following Ramadân begins, one is to observe fasting of the present Ramadân and to make up for the missed days afterwards. As for a person who has delayed making up for such unperformed fasting due to a legal excuse that prevented him from doing so, he does not have to do anything except making up for it (i.e. there is no expiation for it). Yet, if a person has delayed making up for fasting for no legal excuse, he is to make up for the missed days in addition to the feeding of a poor person for each day he had missed, with a quantity of half a *sâ`* of food in expiation for each day.

As for a person who dies before making up for the unperformed fasting days of Ramadân and before the beginning of the following Ramadân, there will be no blame on him, as his death occurred during the period of permissibility to delay making up for the non-performance of whatever fasting days of Ramadân. Likewise, he who has a legal excuse, such as being ill or on a journey, so that he could not make up for the missed fasting days of Ramadân, and dies after the beginning of the following Ramadân, there will be nothing

on him. But, if the person delays making up for the missed fasting days for no legal excuse then dies, there must be expiation for those days to be fulfilled from his inheritance, namely feeding (on his behalf) a poor person for each fasting day he had missed.

Regarding one who dies before performing due expiatory fasting, such as expiatory fasting for *zihâr*[2] or for not sacrificing a sacrificial animal during performing Hajj (Pilgrimage) as *tamattu`*,[3] there must be a feeding of a poor person for each day of unperformed fasting. It is impermissible as well to make up for those unperformed fasting days by proxy. In this respect, feeding the poor must be from the inheritance left by the deceased, as it is considered a fast that cannot be performed on behalf of others during their lifetime, and so the same ruling is to be applied after their death, according to the majority of scholars.

As regards a person who dies without observing expiatory fasting for not fulfilling a vow, his kin may perform that expiatory fast on his behalf. It is stated in the Two Sahîhs that:

> *"A woman came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said, 'My mother has died and there is a fast for not fulfilling a vow due from her; should I fast on her behalf?' He, (PBUH), said, 'Yes.' "*[4]

Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Fasting for not fulfilling a vow is to be performed on behalf of the dead, but not for the original obligation (of fasting). This is the opinion of Imâm Ahmad and others, and the opinion stated in the narrations on the authority of Ibn `Abbâs and `Â'ishah. Besides, this view is supported by means of legal proof and analogical deduction. This is because the vow is not an obligation according to the principles of Sharî`ah (Islamic Law), but it was man who obligated it on himself, so it became like a debt on man, as the Prophet (PBUH) said. As for the obligatory fasting, it is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, so in no way can it be made up on others' behalf, as is the case with performing prayers and pronouncing the Two Testifications of Faith. The wisdom behind their being obligatory is showing the obedience of the observer himself to Allah, as well as his observance of the duties of worship enjoined by Allah, for which man was created. Accordingly, these ordained acts of worship, as well as the Prescribed Prayers, are not to be performed by anyone on another's behalf."*

In addition, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"For the fasting of breaking a vow due from a person who has died, a poor person is to be fed for each day in expiation. This opinion is also maintained by Imâm Ahmad, Ishâq, and others. It is also the opinion based on legal estimation and traditions; the unfulfilled vow is in one's liability just like a debt, so it is to be fulfilled even after one's death (by one's successors). Concerning the fasting of the month of Ramadân, Allah does not make it obligatory on those unable to perform it, but He commands them to make up for it by feeding a poor person in expiation. Accordingly, making up for fasting is obligatory upon the one who can perform it, not the one who cannot. Hence, no one is required to make up for it on the behalf of another. As regards expiatory fasting for breaking a vow and the like, it is indisputable that these can be made up for by someone on another's behalf according to the sahîh (authentic) hadîths stated in this regard."*

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhâri (1950) [4/240] and Muslim (2682) [4/ 263].
2 *Zihâr* is the saying of a husband to his wife, when he wants to abstain from having sex with her, "(Sexually,) you are to me like the back of my mother," i.e. unlawful to approach sexually. That was a type of divorce practiced by Arabs in the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*).
3 *Tamattu'*: It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* (state of ritual consecration) for performing *'Umrah* during the months of *Hajj*, and then, after performing *'Umrah*, a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *Hajj* in the same season.
4 Al-Bukhârî (1953) [4/245] and Muslim (2691) [4/266].

Breaking the Fast: Illness or Old Age

Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, has decreed the obligation of fasting of Ramaḏân on Muslims. It is to be performed when there is no legal excuse. Yet, unperformed fasting days of Ramaḏân are to be made up for on other days with regard to those having legal excuses. There is a third type here, namely those who can neither perform fasting nor make up for it, such as those advanced in years and those who are hopelessly sick. With regard to such persons, Allah relieves them from fasting, enjoining them to feed a poor person for each unperformed fasting day instead; they are to provide half a *ṣâ`* of food for each day. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 286)

Allah also says:

> ***"...And upon those who are able [to fast, but with hardship] - a ransom [as substitute] of feeding a poor person [each day]..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 184)

In his interpretation of the above-mentioned verse, Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The verse refers to those old men and women who are too old to fast; they should feed one poor person for each unperformed day of fasting (instead of fasting)."*[1]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî)

As for hopelessly sick people, the ruling will be the same as that applied in the case of aged people, i.e. they are to feed one poor person for each unperformed day of fasting.

Among those who break their fasting due to a legal excuse are travelers, sick people whose recovery is expected, pregnant or breast-feeding women whose fasting might harm them or their babies, and menstruating women or women in a state of postnatal bleeding. It is obligatory for people in all the aforesaid cases to make up for the unperformed fasting days. That is to say, they are to observe fasting on other days equal to the number of days they have broken their fasting on. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... And whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

On the other hand, breaking the fast is an act of the *Sunnah* for an extremely sick person for whom fasting may cause harm, or a traveler covering a distance that necessitates shortening prayer. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... And whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

Namely, let him break his fast and make up for the days he did not fast later. Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"... Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 185)

In addition, whenever the Prophet (PBUH) was given the choice of one of two matters, he would choose the easier of the two (as long as it was not a sin)[2].

He, (PBUH), also says, as stated in the Two Sa*h*î*h*s:

"It is not righteousness to fast on a journey."[3]

Consequently, if the one on a journey or the one who is ill observes fasting with difficulty, their fasting will be valid, yet detestable.

As for menstruating women or women in a state of postnatal bleeding, they are prohibited to perform fasting, and if they do, it is deemed invalid. Pregnant and breast-feeding women, however, have to make up for the fasting days they have missed on other days. Likewise, women who break their fast due to fear for their children, are to feed a poor person for each unperformed day of fasting.

In this connection, **Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Ibn 'Abbâs and some other Companions have given a fatwa[4] *concerning breaking the fast by pregnant and breast-feeding women who fear harm for their children. They said, 'They may break their fasting and feed a poor person in expiation for each fasting day they miss, i.e. resorting to feeding as expiation for fasting.' "*[5]

In other words, feeding a poor person is expiation when a woman breaks her fast in either case, yet she is obliged to make up for not performing the fast afterwards.

In fact, breaking the fast is deemed obligatory for one who needs it to rescue someone in danger, such as a drowning person or the like.

Ibnul-Qayyim also said:

"There are four reasons for breaking the fast: travel, illness, menstruation, and fearing the harm that fasting may cause in certain cases, such as the case with pregnant and breast-feeding women; the same applies to breaking the fast to save a drowning person."[6]

A Muslim should make his intention to observe obligatory fasting from the previous night, such as the fasting of Rama*d*ân, expiatory fasting, and the fasting for breaking a vow. Intention here means that one should determine to perform the month of Rama*d*ân or to make up for unperformed days of fasting. Also, through intention one decides whether to perform an expiatory fasting, or fast because of breaking a vow. This is because the Prophet's *h*adîth states:

"Indeed, (the correctness and rewards of) deeds depend upon intentions, and every person does get (the reward of) what he has intended."

It is also reported on the authority of `Â'ishah, as a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*, that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When one does not intend fasting before dawn, his fasting is invalid."*[7]

Thus, the Muslim must make the intention of performing the obligatory fasting from the night until before dawn. So, whoever intends fasting in the daytime, such as the one who gets up in the morning, abstains from eating and drinking, and intends fasting, his fasting is insufficient and unacceptable unless it is a supererogatory fasting, not an obligatory one.

Obligatory fasting must be intended beforehand, not during the daytime; the whole daytime is included in the time of fasting and intention cannot refer to something in the past. On the other hand, it is permissible for a Muslim to intend performing supererogatory fasting in the daytime, for `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), narrated:

> *"One day the Prophet (PBUH) came to me and said, 'Do you have anything (to be eaten)?' I replied, 'No.' Thereupon, he (PBUH) said, 'Then I will observe fasting (today).' "*[8]

> (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth* except Al-Bukhârî)

This shows that he (PBUH) was not fasting then, as he asked for food, but intended fasting when he found nothing to eat. Thus, the aforesaid *hadîth* involves a proof of the permissibility of delaying the intention of fasting, only in the case of supererogatory fasting. However, there is a condition on the validity of the supererogatory fasting intended during the daytime; none of the things nullifying fasting should have occurred before the moment of intending that supererogatory fasting, such as eating, drinking, and the like. In other words, if one has done any of such things that nullify fasting before intending supererogatory fasting during the daytime, one's fasting is indisputably invalid.

Endnotes

1 Al-Bukhârî (4505) [8/225].
2 Al-Bukhârî (3560) [6/692] and Muslim (5999) [8/82].
3 Al-Bukhârî (1946) [4/233] and Muslim (2607) [4/233].

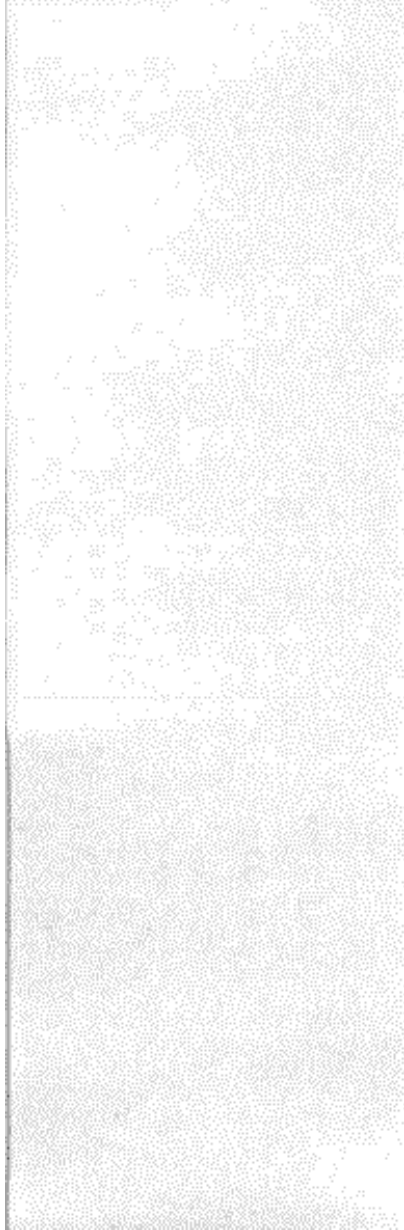
4 Fatwa: A legal opinion issued by a mufti [a Muslim scholar specialized in issuing legal rulings] in response to a layman's question on a point of the Islamic Law.

5 See *"Zâdul-Ma'âd"* [2/29].

6 See the footnote of *Ar-Rawd Al-Murbi'* [3/379-380].

7 An-Nasâ'î (2340) [2/512] and (2330) [2/509], Abû Dâwûd (2454) [2/571], At-Tirmidhî (729) [3/108], and Ibn Mâjah (1700) [2/325].

8 Muslim (2708) [4/276], Abû Dâwûd (2455) [2/572], At-Tirmidhî (732) [3/111], An-Nasâ'î (2324) [2/506], and Ibn Mâjah (1701) [2/325].

V: <u>H</u>AJJ

The Obligation of *Hajj* (Pilgrimage)

Hajj (Pilgrimage) is considered one of the pillars and major acts of Islam; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... And [due] to Allah from the people is a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves [i.e. refuses] - then indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds."*** (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 97)

That is to say, Allah has made an obligation on Muslims to perform *Hajj* to Mecca, as indicated in the word "due" in the aforesaid verse. In the same verse, Almighty Allah refers to those who abandon this act of worship as disbelievers, saying:

> ***"...But whoever disbelieves [i.e. refuses] - then indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds."*** (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 97)

All this confirms that *Hajj* is an obligatory act of worship and whoever does not believe in it is uniformly agreed to be a disbeliever.

Allah, Exalted be He, commanded His Intimate, Prophet Ibrâhîm (Abraham), saying:

"...And proclaim to the people the Hajj [pilgrimage]..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 27)

Moreover, `Alî Ibn Abû Tâlib (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Whoever has the provision and the riding animal (or the means) that can carry him to the House of Allah (i.e. the Ka`bah) and he does not perform Hajj, then it does no matter if he dies as a Jew or a Christian."[1]

(A *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth* related by At-Tirmidhî and other compilers of *Hadîth*, and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) also by At-Tirmidhî)

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

"Islam is based on five (pillars): (i) testifying that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; (ii) performing the (compulsory congregational) prayers dutifully and perfectly; (iii) paying Zakâh; (iv) observing fasting during the month of Ramadân; (v) performing Hajj (i.e. Pilgrimage) for those who can afford it."

The phrase *"who can afford it"* implies a condition on whom performing *Hajj* is obligatory; that one must have enough provisions and means of transportation to travel to Mecca and return back to one's folks.

The reason why Allah decreed *Hajj* is shown in the following verse:

"That they may witness [i.e. attend] benefits for themselves and mention the Name of Allah on known [i.e. specific] days over what He has provided for them of [sacrificial] animals..."

(Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 28)

Allah continues:

"Then let them end their untidiness and fulfill their vows and perform tawâf[2] around the Ancient House."

(Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 29)

In other words, the people are the beneficiaries from Hajj, not Allah, because ***Allah is free from need of the worlds.*** (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 97) Allah is by no means in need of the pilgrims, unlike the pilgrims who are in need of the Lord to glorify and worship. It is the people who need Allah, so they come to visit His House seeking His aid to satisfy their needs.

The obligation of *Hajj* is decreed as the last pillar of Islam, after prayer, *Zakâh*, and fasting. This is because prayer, the basic pillar of religion, is performed five times a day, so it has to be the first pillar of Islam. *Zakâh* has to come next, as it is always combined with prayer in many Qur'anic verses. Similarly, fasting follows them, as it is regularly observed, but once a year. On the other hand, *Hajj* was prescribed in Islam in the ninth year A.H. (i.e. after the Prophet's *Hijrah* (Immigration to Medina) according to the majority of scholars. We should also know that the Prophet (PBUH) performed *Hajj* only once in his lifetime and it is called the Farewell *Hajj* which was in the tenth year A.H.,[3] but he (PBUH) performed *`Umrah* (Lesser Pilgrimage) four times[4] in his lifetime.

The main purpose of *Hajj* and *`Umrah* is to worship Allah in the places he commanded us to worship Him therein. Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *"Pebble throwing and performing sa`y (i.e. going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah) are made (i.e. decreed) for mentioning Allah."*[5]

Hajj (Pilgrimage) is uniformly agreed upon by Muslim scholars as an obligatory act of worship, and one of the pillars of Islam. It is prescribed for all Muslims; they are to perform *Hajj* once in their lifetime provided they can afford it, and it is a collective duty on all Muslims at a set time every year. On the other hand, any performance of *Hajj* other than the obligatory one is considered a voluntary act of worship.

Concerning *`Umrah*, many scholars regard it as a religious duty, for when the Prophet (PBUH) was asked if women had to participate in *jihâd* (fighting in the Cause of Allah), he (PBUH) replied:

> *"Yes, there is a jihâd prescribed for them in which there is no fighting, namely Hajj and `Umrah."*[6]

Accordingly, if *`Umrah* is authenticated to be a religious duty for women, then the more it is so for men. To illustrate, once a man said to the Prophet (PBUH), "My father is an old man who can neither perform *Hajj* nor *`Umrah*

nor even travel." Upon that, the Prophet (PBUH) said to him:

> *"Perform Hajj and 'Umrah on behalf of your father."*[7]
>
> (Related by the Five Compilers of *Hadîth* and deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by At-Tirmidhî)

According to the above, it is obligatory for a Muslim to perform *Hajj* and *'Umrah* once in a lifetime; the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Perform Hajj only once, and whoever performs it more than that, it is a voluntary act for him."*[8]

In *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)*, it is narrated on the authority of Abû Hurayrah that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"O people! Allah has made Hajj obligatory for you, so perform Hajj." Upon that, a man asked, "(Is it to be performed) every year?" The Prophet (PBUH) answered, "If I were to say 'Yes,' it would become obligatory (for you to perform it every year) and you would not be able to do it."*[9]

A Muslim, male or female, must perform the obligatory *Hajj* as soon as one is able to, and whoever defers it without a legal excuse is deemed sinful, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Make haste to (perform the obligation of) Hajj, for the one of you does not know what might afflict him."*[10]
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad)

There are five conditions that must be fulfilled as prerequisites of performing *Hajj*: to be a Muslim, to be sane, to have reached puberty, to be free (not a slave), and to be able to perform it. Those who meet these prerequisites are obliged to perform *Hajj* immediately.

Performing *Hajj* and *'Umrah* for a little boy is accepted as a supererogatory act of worship, as indicated in the *hadîth* narrated by Ibn 'Abbâs:

> *"A woman lifted up a boy to (show him to) the Prophet and said, 'Would this (child) be credited with performing Hajj?' He (PBUH) replied, 'Yes, and you will have a reward.'"*[11]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)

Scholars uniformly agree that if a boy performs *Hajj* before reaching puberty, it is still obligatory for him to do it once again when he is an adult and has the ability to do it. That is to say, *Hajj*, which is performed in childhood, does not spare a person the obligatory *Hajj* when reaching puberty, and so is the case of `*Umrah*.

As for a child under the age of discretion, his guardian can assume *ihrâm* (a state of ritual consecration during *Hajj* or `*Umrah*) and declare the intention to perform *Hajj* on his behalf. The guardian should stop the child from doing whatever acts which are forbidden during *Hajj*, and should perform *tawâf* (circumambulating the Ka`bah) and *sa`y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah) on behalf of the child while carrying him. The guardian is also to accompany the child to Mount `Arafah, Muzdalifah, and Minâ, throwing the pebbles on his behalf.

However, if the child reaches the age of discretion, he can assume *ihrâm* and declare the intention to perform *Hajj* after seeking the permission of his guardian. The child is to perform whatever rites of *Hajj* he can do, and his guardian performs whatever the child is unable to do on his behalf, such as throwing the pebbles or the like. If the child is unable to walk, his guardian can carry him performing *tawâf*, *sa`y*, etc. Still, the child must perform whatever he can perform himself, whether or not (he is) at the age of discretion, and it is impermissible to perform any of the rites of *Hajj* on his behalf as long as the child is able to perform it himself. Also, he should avoid whatever acts forbidden to be done by adults during *Hajj*.

The one capable of performing *Hajj* is that who can afford it both physically and financially, i.e. the one able to endure the journey and have enough money to go and return. One has also to be able to supply one's children and whomever one financially supports, leaving them enough money until one returns. In addition, one has to settle all one's debts and fulfill all one's financial duties before heading for *Hajj*, provided the journey to *Hajj* is safe for the pilgrim's life and possessions.

So, if a person can afford *Hajj* financially but not physically, such as being disabled by old age or an incurable chronic disease, one in this case may assign someone to perform *Hajj* on his behalf. Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

"A woman from (the tribe of) Khath`am said, 'O Messenger of Allah! The obligation of Hajj enjoined by Allah has become due on my father and he is old and weak, and he cannot sit firm on the mount (to travel); may I perform Hajj on his behalf?' The Prophet (PBUH) replied, 'Yes, you may.'"[12]

The person who performs *Hajj* on behalf of another must have performed *Hajj* on his own behalf first, according to the following *hadith* reported by Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him):

"The Prophet (PBUH) heard a man saying talbiyah in this way, 'Here I am at Your service O Allah, on behalf of Shubrumah.' He (the Prophet) asked, 'Have you performed Hajj on your own behalf?' The man said, 'No.' The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'Perform Hajj on your own behalf first, then perform it on behalf of Shubrumah.'"[13]

(Related through a good chain of transmitters and is deemed *sahîh* (authentic) by Al-Bayhaqî)

The one who performs *Hajj* on behalf of another should be given enough money to cover the costs of the journey back and forth. However, he should by no means get fees in return for this service, and should never use it as a means of earning money. He who performs *Hajj* on behalf of another should be doing this with the intention of helping a Muslim brother or sister and also visiting the House of Allah (the Ka`bah) and the sacred precincts. Thus, one's performance of *Hajj* on behalf of another should be intended for the Sake of Allah, not for any worldly purpose. On the other hand, if *Hajj* is performed in this way in return for money, then it will be invalid.

Endnotes

1 At-Tirmidhî (811) [3/176].
2 *Tawâf*: Circumambulating the Ka`bah.
3 Al-Bukhârî (4404) [8/134] and Muslim (3025) [4/460]. See also Muslim (2941) [4/404].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1778) [3/757] and Muslim (3023) [4/459].
5 Abû Dâwûd (1888) [2/307] and At-Tirmidhî (902) [3/246].
6 Ahmad (25198) [6/166], An-Nasâ'î (2627) [3/121] and Ibn Mâjah (2901) [3/413]. See also Al-Bukhâri (152) [3/480].

7 Abû Dâwûd (1810) [2/276], At-Tirmidhî (930) [3/269], An-Nasâ'î (2620) [3/117], and Ibn Mâjah (2906) [3/415].
8 Abû Dâwûd (1721) [2/237], An-Nasâ'î (2619) [3/117] and Ibn Mâjah (2886) [3/406].
9 Muslim (3244) [5/105].
10 Ahmad (2869) [1/314-315].
11 Muslim (1336).
12 Al-Bukhârî (1513) [3/476] and Muslim (3238) [5/101].
13 Abû Dâwûd (1811) [2/276] and Ibn Mâjah (2903) [3/414].

Women's *H̲ajj* and Rulings on Performing It on Someone's Behalf

H̲ajj is prescribed for every Muslim, male or female, yet there are some additional conditions for *H̲ajj* that are obligatory for women. A woman must be accompanied by a *mah̲ram*[1] during *H̲ajj*. It is impermissible in religion for a woman to travel for *H̲ajj* or anything else without a *mah̲ram*, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"A woman should not travel except with a mah̲ram, and no man may visit her except in the presence of a mah̲ram."*[2]
>
> (Related by Imâm Ah̲mad with an authentic chain of transmitters)

It is also narrated in the Two *Sah̲îh̲*s that a man said to the Prophet (PBUH):

> *"O Messenger of Allah! My wife is proceeding for H̲ajj and I have enlisted in the army for such-and-such a battle." Thereupon, the Prophet (PBUH) said to him, "Go, and perform H̲ajj with your wife."*[3]

Moreover, it is stated in the *Sahîh* Books (Authentic Books of *Hadîth*) and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"It is impermissible for a woman to travel for one day and night except with a mahram."*[4]

All the aforesaid *hadîths* state that it is prohibited for a woman to travel without a *mahram*, whether she is traveling for *Hajj* or anything else, so as to avoid corruption or seduction on her part or others when she is abroad alone.

Imâm Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"A mahram is a prerequisite. Thus, it is not obligatory for a woman who has no mahram to perform Hajj, or to make someone perform it on her behalf."*

The *mahram* of a woman should be her husband or any person unmarriageable to her forever, either by kinship such as a brother, a father, an uncle, and a nephew, or by being unmarriageable to her for a legal reason such as a foster brother, or by affinity, such as a stepfather or a stepson. To illustrate, it is narrated in *Sahîh Muslim (Muslim's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"It is not lawful for a woman believing in Allah to undertake a journey extending over three days or more unless she is in the company of her father, her son, her husband, her brother, or any other mahram."*[5]

A woman must cover the expenses of her *mahram* during the journey of *Hajj*. Therefore, a woman is not obliged to perform *Hajj* until she has enough money to cover her own and her *mahram*'s expenses to and fro.

If a woman finds a *mahram* yet she delays performing *Hajj*, out of negligence, until she loses him while she still possesses the financial capability, she has to wait until she finds another *mahram*. However, if she has lost hope in finding another *mahram*, she is to find someone to perform *Hajj* on her behalf.

If someone is obliged to perform *Hajj* but he died before doing it, an amount of money, enough to cover the *Hajj* expenses, should be taken out of the capital of his inheritance and given to someone to perform it on his behalf. Al-Bukhârî related on the authority of Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) that:

> *"A woman said to the Prophet, 'O Messenger of Allah! My mother had vowed to perform Hajj but she died before performing it. May*

I perform Hajj on her behalf?' He replied, 'Yes, perform Hajj on her behalf. Had there been a debt on your mother, would you have paid it or not? (If yes) so pay Allah's debt as He has more right to fulfill His debt (i.e. the obligation of Hajj).' "[6]

The aforesaid *hadîth* proves that anyone who dies before performing the obligation of *Hajj*, then his son or guardian should do it on his behalf or they should find someone to do it on his behalf, provided that the expenses of the *Hajj* journey is taken from his inheritance. Moreover, the guardian should also pay the debts of the dead person; scholars uniformly agree that the debt of a man should be taken out of his money, and so should be any other financial obligations (such as the expenses of performing *Hajj* for him and the like).

According to another *hadîth*, the Prophet (PBUH) enjoined a woman whose sister vowed to perform *Hajj* and died before fulfilling it, to perform *Hajj* on her behalf[7]. Similarly, it was related in the *Sunan* of Ad-Dâraqutnî that he (PBUH) enjoined a man whose father died before performing the obligation of *Hajj*, to perform it on behalf of his father[8]. That is to say, there is not much legal difference between the obligation of a legislative origin and that which one vows upon himself; both have to be fulfilled, whether it is enjoined by the deceased in his/her will to perform it on his/her behalf or not.

When someone performs *Hajj* on behalf of another, the latter becomes no longer obliged to perform it. It is as if he has performed it himself. In this case, the one performing *Hajj* for another is called a **"deputy pilgrim."** Upon performing *Hajj* on behalf of another, a deputy pilgrim should have the intention of performing *Hajj* on that person's behalf, and he is to chant *talbiyah* also on his behalf; it is sufficient to make the intention to perform the rites of *Hajj* on someone's behalf without mentioning his name. However, if the deputy pilgrim forgets the name of the person on behalf of whom he is performing *Hajj*, he can declare the intention and recite *talbiyhah* on behalf of the one who has given him money to perform *Hajj* on his behalf, without mentioning his name.

It is recommended for a Muslim to perform *Hajj* on behalf of his parents whether they are dead or alive but lacking the ability to do it; a Muslim is to perform it on his mother's behalf first, as the mother is worthier of one's dutifulness.

Endnotes

1 *Mahram*: A woman's husband or any unmarriageable kin of hers.
2 Al-Bukhârî (1862) and (1086, 1087), and Muslim (1341) and (1338).
3 Al-Bukhârî (3006) [6/172] and Muslim (3259) [5/113].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1088) [2/730] and Muslim (3255) [5/111].
5 Muslim (3257) [5/112].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1852) [4/84].
7 Al-Bukhârî (6699) [11/711].
8 Ad-Dâraqutnî (2586) [2/229].

Virtues of *Hajj* and Its Preparations

Hajj has a magnificent virtue and a great reward. At-Tirmidhî narrated a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*, which he deemed *sahîh* (authentic), on the authority of `Abdullâh Ibn Mas`ûd stating that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Perform Hajj and `Umrah (Lesser Pilgrimage) making them follow each other, for they remove poverty and sins as a blacksmith's bellows removes impurities from iron, gold, and silver. And an accepted performance of Hajj gets no reward less than Paradise."*[1]

Moreover, it was narrated in *Sahîh Al-Bukhârî (Al-Bukhârî's Authentic Book of Hadîth)* that `Â'ishah (the Prophet's wife) asked the Prophet (PBUH) saying:

> *"We see that jihâd*[2] *is the best of (good) deeds, so should we not (as women) participate in jihâd?" He (PBUH) replied, "The best and the most superior jihâd for women is the accepted performance of Hajj."*[3]

It is important to point out that an accepted performance of *Hajj* is that which is perfectly performed and not tarnished with ill deeds. It is also maintained that an accepted *Hajj* is that which is worthy of being accepted by Allah.

Whenever one intends to perform *Hajj*, one should repent of all one's sins, and free oneself from being unjust to others, by returning rights to those to whom they are due. One should also return all trusts, loans and debts in one's possession to their owners before setting out for *Hajj*. Moreover, one should ask the forgiveness of those whom one has wronged, and should also write one's will before departure. In case one could not settle such obligations before traveling for *Hajj*, one should authorize someone to do them on one's behalf. One, as well, should secure one's children and those one supports with enough money until one's return. Furthermore, one must make sure that the money one uses for the expenses of *Hajj* is lawfully obtained, and should also take enough provisions and money for the trip, so that one might not need the assistance of anyone there, provided that one's provisions be lawfully obtained; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 267)

In addition to the above, a pilgrim should try to find a pious companion to morally support him during the journey and while performing the rites of *Hajj*; a righteous mate to guide him when he is wrong and to remind him when he forgets. On the other hand, a pilgrim should renew his intention, determining that his performance of *Hajj* is only for the Sake of Allah. A pilgrim should also treat people with kindness and good manners, avoid quarreling or annoying others, and safeguard his tongue against insult, backbiting, and whatever does not please Allah and His Messenger.

Endnotes

1 At-Tirmidhî (809) [3/175], An-Nasâ'î (2630) [3/122], and Ibn Mâjah (2887) [3/407] and (2888) [3/407].

2 *Jihâd*: Fighting in the Cause of Allah.

3 Al-Bukhâri (1861) [4/93].

Mîqâts[1] of *Hajj*

There are certain times for *Hajj*, and certain sites for entering the state of *ihrâm*.

The Fixed Times of *Hajj*

The times specified for *Hajj* are mentioned by Allah, Exalted be He, when He says:

> ***"Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihrâm], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 197)

These months are: Shawwâl, Dhûl-Qa`dah, and the first ten days of Dhûl-Hijjah. Therefore, anyone who enters the state of *ihrâm* in these months with the intention to perform *Hajj* must avoid offensive words and deeds which contradict the purity of that act of worship, and should also be preoccupied with good deeds and abide by piety.

The Sites for Entering the State of *Ihrâm*

They are the specific places which a pilgrim must not exceed and head for Mecca without entering the state of *ihrâm* (a state of ritual consecration during *Hajj* or `*Umrah*), declaring his intention to perform *Hajj*. These places were pointed out by the Prophet (PBUH) as mentioned in the narration of `Abdullâh Ibn `Abbâs who said:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) specified Dhul-Hulayfah (as a site for ihrâm) for the people of Medina, Al-Juhfah for the people of Ash-Shâm,*[2] *Qarnul-Manâzil for the people of Najd, and Yalamlam for the people of Yemen, saying, 'They are (sites for ihrâm) for those people and for any other people coming through them (i.e. those sites) with the intention of performing Hajj and `Umrah (Lesser Pilgrimage). And whoever is living within these boundaries can assume ihrâm from the place he starts from, and the people of Mecca can assume ihrâm from Mecca.' "*[3]

Moreover, Imâm Muslim related on the authority of Jâbir that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"... The muhall*[4] *of the people of Iraq is Dhâtu-`Irq."*[5]

The idea behind setting such *mîqâts* for *Hajj* is as follows: The House of Allah (the Ka`bah), being so glorified and honored by Allah, is fortified by Allah through Mecca and protected by the Sanctuary of Mecca which, in turn, is glorified by those *mîqâts* beyond which one cannot pass without being in the state of *ihrâm* as a sign of honor and glorification to the House of Allah.

The farthest of these sites for entering *ihrâm* is Dhul-Hulayfah, which is specified for the people of Medina; the distance between this place and Mecca is about a ten-day journey (on camels or the like). As for the people of Ash-Shâm, Egypt and Morocco, the site for *ihrâm* is Al-Juhfah, which is near Râbigh; this place is about three-night journey far from Mecca, and some say it is even further. Yalamlam, which is two-night journey far from Mecca, is the site for *ihrâm* for those coming from Yemen. The site for *ihrâm* (a state of ritual consecration during *Hajj* or `*Umrah*) for the people of Najd is Qarnul-Manâzil - now known as As-Sayl - which is two-night journey far from Mecca. As regards the people of Iraq and those of the East, the site for *ihrâm* is Dhâtu-`Irq, which is two-night journey far from Mecca. These are the sites for entering *ihrâm* for the people of the aforesaid places and those passing through them with the intention of performing *Hajj* or `*Umrah*. Regarding

those who dwell in places that are nearer to Mecca than the aforementioned places, they assume *ihrâm* for *Hajj* or `*Umrah* from their places. As mentioned above, the residents of Mecca, however, enter *ihrâm* for *Hajj* from their own residence, i.e. from places at Mecca itself; they do not have to get out of Mecca to assume *ihrâm* from there. However, when it comes to `*Umrah*, they have to get out of Mecca to the nearest precincts wherefrom they can assume *ihrâm*.

As for those who do not pass by any of the aforesaid sites of *ihrâm* on their way to perform *Hajj*, they have to assume *ihrâm* once they know they are at the nearest place opposite to any of these sites. Al-Bukhârî related that `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) said to the people of Iraq:

> *"Make your site for ihrâm a place situated opposite to it (i.e. opposite to Qarnul-Manâzil, the place of ihrâm for the people of Najd) on your usual way."*[6]

Similarly, those who travel by plane should assume *ihrâm* once they know that they are parallel to any of the sites for *ihrâm* during the flight. However, they should be prepared before getting on board the plane by ritual bathing and cleaning. Afterwards, whenever the plane reaches a place that is parallel to any of the aforesaid sites for *ihrâm*, they should declare the intention of *ihrâm* and chant *talbiyah* in the plane. It is impermissible for one to delay *ihrâm* until the plane lands in the airport of Jeddah as some pilgrims mistakenly do, as both Jeddah and Bahrah are not sites for *ihrâm* except for their own people or anyone who intends to perform *Hajj* or `*Umrah* while being there. Otherwise, it is impermissible to assume *ihrâm* from Jeddah, as it will be regarded as negligence of one of the rites of *Hajj*, namely assuming *ihrâm* from one of its decreed sites, and one in this case will be obliged to slaughter a sacrificial animal in expiation.

Here is a common mistake made by many people and it has to be pointed out; some people mistakenly believe that they have to take a ritual bath before assuming *ihrâm*, arguing that this is not possible while being in a plane and so on. Therefore, it is important to point out that *ihrâm* means declaring the intention to perform the rites of *Hajj* or `*Umrah*, avoiding the acts prohibited to be done while being in a state of *ihrâm* as much as possible. As for washing, wearing perfumes, and the like, they are acts of the *Sunnah* which a Muslim can do before getting on board the plane, and assuming *ihrâm* without observing them is permissible. So, a plane passenger can make the intention to assume *ihrâm* and recite *talbiyah* while being in his/her seat once the plane is over any of the known sites for *ihrâm* or just before it. This is known by asking the pilots

or the hostesses of the plane, or trying to find it out independently through investigation and estimation. Thus, one would have done one's utmost in this regard. However, if one does not care, it will be considered an inexcusable negligence and indifference regarding one of the prerequisites of *Hajj* and *'Umrah*, namely *ihrâm*, which may invalidate them.

As for those who pass by their site of *ihrâm* without assuming it, they have to return to that site and assume *ihrâm*, for it is a manageable obligation that should never be neglected. So, if one does not go back and assume *ihrâm* from the right site - as some mistakenly do from Jeddah and the like - one in this case will be obliged to slaughter a sacrificial animal in expiation, i.e. to slaughter a sheep or to get one-seventh of a camel or one-seventh of a cow and divide it among the residents of the Sanctuary of Mecca, provided one (the pilgrim who sacrifices) should eat nothing from it.

In a nutshell, Muslims should take an interest in their religious matters so as to perform all acts of worship properly and perfectly as legally enjoined. Among these religious matters is the *ihrâm* for *Hajj* and *'Umrah*; it has to be assumed from the sites for *ihrâm* specified by the Prophet (PBUH). Therefore, a Muslim should be aware of these sites and never pass them without being in a state of *ihrâm*.

Endnotes

1 *Mîqâts* of *Hajj*: The fixed times of *Hajj* and the sites for entering the state of *ihrâm*.
2 Ash-Shâm: The Levant; the region covering Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine.
3 Al-Bukhârî (1524) [3/484] and Muslim (2796) [4/324].
4 *Muhall*: The site for entering the state of *ihrâm*.
5 Muslim (2802)[4/326].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1531) [3/490].

How to Assume *Ihrâm*

Ihrâm (a state of ritual consecration during *Hajj* or `*Umrah*) is the first of the rites of *Hajj*, and it means the intention to start the rites. It is called *ihrâm* (which is derived from the Arabic word "*harâm*," i.e. forbidden or prohibited) because a pilgrim by assuming *ihrâm* **prohibits** himself from all the acts that have been permissible before being in this state, such as sexual intercourse, wearing perfume, clipping one's fingernails, having one's hair cut, or wearing certain kinds of clothes. To illustrate, **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"A man is not considered in a state of ihrâm once he intends, with his heart, to perform Hajj, for the intention is already in his heart since he has left his hometown (heading for Mecca). So, there must be specific words or deeds through which he becomes in a state of ihrâm."*[1]

Before assuming *ihrâm*, it is desirable to get prepared for such a state by some deeds prior to this great act of worship:

First: It is desirable to have a bath - washing the whole body - before *iḫrâm*, for the Prophet (PBUH) used to do so before assuming *iḫrâm*[2]. This is also because bathing is a better and more comprehensive way of cleaning and ridding oneself of any undesired smell. Moreover, having a bath upon assuming *iḫrâm* is also required for a woman in a state of postnatal bleeding or menstruation, for the Prophet (PBUH) commanded Asmâ' Bint `Umays, who was in a state of confinement, to take a bath before assuming *iḫrâm*, as related by Imâm Muslim[3]. He (PBUH) also commanded `Â'ishah (his wife) to do the same though she was in her menstrual period[4]. The purpose of this is to clean the body, remove undesired smells and remove the impurity of menstruation or confinement.

Second: Before assuming *iḫrâm*, it is desirable to clean oneself perfectly well, removing the hair which is legally enjoined to be removed, such as trimming the moustache, shaving the hair of the armpits, and shaving the pubic hair. One should do this before assuming *iḫrâm* because it will not be allowed when being in a state of *iḫrâm*. Yet, removing such kinds of hair is not one of the prerequisites for *iḫrâm*. In other words, if one does not need to trim or shave any of them, one is not obliged to do so; it is permissible to do so if needed.

Third: It is desirable for a pilgrim to perfume oneself using whatever is available, such as musk, incense, rose-water, aloes, or the like, for `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported:

"I used to scent Allah's Messenger (PBUH) whenever he wanted to assume iḫrâm and (also) on finishing iḫrâm before circumambulating the House of Allah (i.e. before ṯawâf)."[5]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"If a pilgrim wants to wear some perfume before assuming iḫrâm it will be fine. Yet, doing so is not obligatory, for the Prophet (PBUH) did so but he did not enjoin the people to do the same."[6]

Fourth: It is desirable for male pilgrims before *iḫrâm* to take off all tailored or sewn clothes and wear something unstitched; the Prophet (PBUH) used to take off his tailored or sewn clothes and wear something unstitched - after taking a bath - to assume *iḫrâm*[7]. So, a pilgrim should wear a white, clean unstitched loincloth wrapped round the lower part of the body, wrapping another sheet of white, clean, unstitched cloth round the upper part. Yet, it is permissible to replace the white color

with any other color provided it is traditionally befitting men. The idea behind this is to withdraw oneself from luxury and to have the feeling of a submissive servant of Allah through wearing such humble clothing. Moreover, such clothing always reminds one of being in a state of *i<u>h</u>râm*, and thus one keeps alert and avoids committing the acts prohibited during *i<u>h</u>râm*. The clothing of *i<u>h</u>râm* reminds one of death, the shroud of dead people, and the Day of Resurrection, and so on and so forth. In addition, taking off sewn clothes before intending to assume *i<u>h</u>râm* is an act of the *Sunnah*, but it is obligatory after assuming *i<u>h</u>râm*. So, if a pilgrim intends assuming *i<u>h</u>râm* while still wearing his ordinary sewn clothes, his *i<u>h</u>râm* is considered valid, but he is then obliged to take such clothes off and put on the clothes of *i<u>h</u>râm*.

By fulfilling the aforesaid prerequisites, a pilgrim is thus prepared to be in a state of *i<u>h</u>râm*, but such acts themselves are not called *i<u>h</u>râm* as many people mistakenly believe; *i<u>h</u>râm* means the intention of starting performing the rites of *<u>H</u>ajj* or *`Umrah*. Accordingly, a pilgrim is not considered in a state of *i<u>h</u>râm* once he takes off his sewn clothes and wears the aforementioned clothing of *i<u>h</u>râm* without having the intention of starting performing the rites of *<u>H</u>ajj* or *`Umrah*. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Indeed, (the correctness and rewards of) deeds depend upon intentions..."

As for praying before assuming *i<u>h</u>râm*, the more valid opinion is that there is not a special kind of prayer to be offered before *i<u>h</u>râm*. However, if the time of *i<u>h</u>râm* coincides with an obligatory prayer, then a pilgrim is to perform the obligatory prayer first then assume *i<u>h</u>râm*. To illustrate, it was narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) assumed *i<u>h</u>râm* immediately following performing (an obligatory) prayer[8]. Moreover, Anas reported that the Prophet (PBUH) performed the *<u>Z</u>uhr* (Noon) Prayer then rode his mount beast,[9] and when he came to the hill of Al-Baydâ' he raised his voice with *talbyiah*. The great Muslim scholar **Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him), said:

"It was never reported that the Prophet (PBUH) specified performing two rak`ahs (units of prayer) for assuming ihram; what was reported is that he performed the obligatory <u>Z</u>uhr (Noon) Prayer before it."[10]

It is important here to draw the attention of pilgrims to a very important matter; many pilgrims mistakenly believe that they have to assume *i<u>h</u>râm* from the mosque in the site for *i<u>h</u>râm* for them. As a result, many pilgrims, males and females, hurry to such mosques, overcrowding them, to start assuming *i<u>h</u>râm*

from there. They may also change their clothes there and wear the clothing of *ihrâm*, while in fact all such issues are, by all means, baseless. Rather, Muslims are just required to assume *ihrâm* from the proper site for *ihrâm* for them, not specifically from the mosques therein. They can assume *ihrâm* anywhere in such sites, and there is no specific place in a certain site from which a pilgrim is obliged to assume *ihrâm*. That is to say, pilgrims can assume *ihrâm* wherever is appropriate for them in their site for *ihrâm*, and this makes it easier for them and their fellows. This also spares pilgrims being exposed before one another or being jammed in certain places. We would like to point out that those mosques in the sites for *ihrâm* were not there during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH), and that they were not built for the purpose of assuming *ihrâm*. However, they were built for the inhabitants of and around such places to perform prayer therein. This is very important to bear in mind, and may Allah grant us all success.

A pilgrim is free to choose either the three kinds of *ihrâm*, namely *tamattu`*, *ifrâd*, and *qirân*:

***Tamattu`*:** It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *`Umrah* during the months of *Hajj*, and then, after performing *`Umrah*, a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *Hajj* in the same season.

***Ifrâd*:** It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *Hajj* only, keeping in the state of *ihrâm* until he finishes performing the rites of *Hajj*.

***Qirân*:** It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing both *`Umrah* and *Hajj* together, or to assume *ihrâm* for *`Umrah* then, before starting the *tawâf* (circumambulating the Ka`bah) for *`Umrah*, a pilgrim intends performing both *`Umrah* and *Hajj* either from the *miqât* or before the *tawâf* of *`Umrah*. In this case, a pilgrim is to perform both *tawâf* and *sa`y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah) for both.

It is important to point out that a pilgrim who intends *tamattu`* or *qirân* is obliged to slaughter a sacrificial animal if he is not a resident of Mecca. We should also know that the best of the aforesaid three ways of *ihrâm* is *tamattu`* for various legal proofs.

Once a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* in any of the aforesaid three ways, he is to chant *talbiyah*, saying:

> *"Here I am at Your service, O Allah, here I am at Your service. Here I am at Your service, You have no partner, here I am at Your service. Verily, all praise, blessings, and dominion are Yours. You have no partner."*

A pilgrim should raise his voice with *talbiyah*, saying it repeatedly.

Endnotes

1 See: *Majmû'ul-Fatâwâ* [26/22, 108].
2 At-Tirmidhî (830) [3/192].
3 Muslim (2900) [4/371] and (2941) [4/404].
4 Muslim (2929) [4/392].
5 Al-Bukhârî (1539) [3/499] and Muslim (2818) [4/337].
6 See: *Majmû'ul-Fatâwâ* [26/107].
7 At-Tirmidhî (830) [3/193].
8 At-Tirmidhî (819) [3/182] and An-Nasâ'î (2753) [3/176].
9 Abû Dâwûd (1774) [2/258] and An-Nasâ'î (2661) [3/136].
10 See: *Zâdul-Ma'âd*.

Acts Prohibited during *Ihrâm*

There are specific forbidden acts that a pilgrim should avoid while being in a state of *ihrâm* (a state of ritual consecration during *Hajj* or `*Umrah*). These prohibited acts are nine:

First: It is prohibited during *ihârm* to cut, shave, pluck out, or remove any kind of hair from one's body without a legal excuse, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial animal has reached its place of slaughter..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 196)

As shown in the verse, Allah prohibits pilgrims to shave their heads while being in a state of *ihrâm*, and this in turn applies to all kinds of hair in the body. This is because removing any kind of hair from the body implies luxury and elegance, which contradict the spirit of the state of *ihrâm*, in which a pilgrim is supposed to be unkempt and dusty. It is permissible, however, to remove any unusual hair that is abnormally around the eye or on the eyelid without

any expiation. This is because it is not a normal place for hair to grow, and by removing it one spares oneself harm or pain.

Second: A *muhrim*[1] is prohibited to clip ones fingernails or toenails without any legal excuse. Yet, if a nail is broken and one has to clip it or to remove it with part of its skin, it is permissible for one to do so without any expiation for that. This is because it is removed as a consequence of being broken; as for the skin, it is related to the nail and thus the same ruling is applicable. In addition, it is permissible to remove the hair of the head if it causes any harm such as lice or headache, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And whoever among you is ill or has an ailment of the head [making shaving necessary must offer] a ransom of fasting [three days] or charity or sacrifice..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 196)

Also, Ka'b Ibn 'Ujrah reported:

> *"There was an ailment in my head and I was carried to the Prophet (PBUH) while lice were scattering over my face. Upon that, the Prophet (PBUH) said to me, 'I have never imagined that your ailment has reached such an extent as I see! Can you afford a sheep?' I replied, 'No.' Thereupon, the following verse was revealed:* ***'...And whoever among you is ill or has an ailment of the head [making shaving necessary must offer] a ransom of fasting [three days] or charity or sacrifice...'*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 196) *Then the Prophet (PBUH) said to me, 'Fast for three days, or feed six needy people, or slaughter a sheep (in expiation for shaving the hair of the head despite ihrâm).' "*[2]

The permissibility here is because the ailment is caused by lice, not by the hair itself.

Moreover, it is permissible for the *muhrim* to wash his hair with *sidr* (the extract of the lote tree leaves) and the like, for it is narrated in the Two Sahîhs[3] that the Prophet (PBUH) once washed his head while being in a state of *ihrâm*, moving his hands forward and backward through his head[4]. **Shaykhul-Islâm Taqiyyud-Dîn Ibn Taymiyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Scholars unanimously agree that it is permissible for a muhrim to take a bath to purify from janâbah (a major ritual impurity; in case of having a wet dream during ihrâm) or for any other reason."*

Third: A male *muhrim* is prohibited to cover his head, as the Prophet (PBUH) prohibited wearing a turban, hood, or anything of the kind while being in a state of *ihrâm*. In this regard, the great Muslim scholar **Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"There is consensus that everything that touches the head with the purpose of covering it, such as a turban, a cap, a hat, or anything else, is prohibited (during ihrâm)."*

This is applicable to all sorts of head covers, be it something usual such as a turban or unusual such as a paper, mud, henna, or a headband. A *muhrim* can seek the shelter of a tent, a tree, or a house, for it was narrated that a tent was pitched for the Prophet (PBUH) to take shelter therein while being in a state of *ihrâm*[5]. On the other hand, it is permissible for a *muhrim* to use an umbrella for shading, only when necessary. Likewise, it is permissible for a *muhrim* to ride a car with a roof or carry his baggage above his head, provided not for the purpose of covering the head.

Fourth: It is also prohibited for a male *muhrim* to wear sewn clothes to cover all or parts of the body, such as a shirt, a turban, or a pair of trousers. Similarly, it is prohibited for a male *muhrim* to wear anything made exactly to fit a certain part of the body, such as shoes, gloves, or socks. It is narrated in the Two *Sahîhs* that when the Prophet (PBUH) was asked what a *muhrim* should wear, he (PBUH) replied:

> *"A muhrim should not wear a shirt, or a turban, or a hooded cloak, or a pair of trousers, or a cloth touched with 'wars' (a yellow good-smelled plant used for dyeing) or with saffron, nor (should he wear) khuffs (leather socks or shoes)."*[6]

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) prohibited muhrims to wear shirts, hooded cloaks, trousers, khuffs,*[7] *or turbans. He (PBUH) also forbade them to cover the head of a male muhrim in case he died, and ordered the man who assumed ihrâm while wearing a jubbah to take it off. So, wearing anything similar to a jubbah (on the pretext that it is not a jubbah) is regarded as a dishonest interpretation of what the Prophet (PBUH) forbade. A muhrim is also prohibited to wear something similar to a shirt, be it with or without sleeves, or new or torn. The same prohibition applies to wearing a jubbah or a cloak in whose sleeves one passes one's hands..."*

Ibn Taymiyah then continued:

> "*... This is the juristic meaning of not wearing 'sewn' clothing while being in a state of ihrâm; sewn clothing is any garment made to fit a certain part of the body. Therefore, a muhrim is not to wear anything similar to trousers, such as shorts and the like.*"[8]

However, if a *muhrim* does not find a suitable pair of slippers, he may wear *kuffs* (leather socks or shoes), and if he does not find a suitable loincloth, he may wear a pair of trousers until he finds a suitable one. Once the *muhrim* finds a proper loincloth, he must take off the trousers and wear it, as the Prophet (PBUH) gave permission for male *muhrims* over Mount `Arafât to wear trousers if they do not find a loincloth[9].

As for a female *muhrim*, she may wear whatever clothes she likes while being in a state of *ihrâm*, for she must be covered well. Still, she is not allowed to wear a *burqu`* (i.e., a veil covering the face and has two holes for the eyes to permit vision). So, a female *muhrim* is not to wear a *burqu`*, but she is to cover her face with other things such as a *khimâr* (a shawl-like cloth covering the head and shoulders) and a gown. Moreover, a female *muhrim* should not wear gloves to cover her hands, for the Prophet (PBUH) said in the *hadîth* related by Al-Bukhârî and other compilers of *Hadîth*:

> "*A female muhrim must not wear a niqâb (a face-covering veil), nor must she wear gloves.*"[10]

In this connection, **Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> "*The Prophet's prohibition (for female pilgrims) of covering their faces or wearing gloves indicates that a woman's face is treated as a man's body, not head. A male muhrim is not to cover his body with sewn clothes made specifically for certain parts of the body. Similarly, a female muhrim is not to cover her face with a specific face-cover such as a niqâb (a face-covering veil) or a burqu`. However, she should cover herself with a veil (which shows only her face) and a gown according to the more valid of the two juristic opinions in this regard.*"[11]

The gloves are specifically made for the hands to protect them from cold.

A female *muhrim* is primarily obliged to hide her face from the eyes of men, and this is not through wearing a *burqu`*. To illustrate, `Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> "*Men would pass by us when we accompanied Allah's Messenger (PBUH) while we were in the state of ihrâm (a state of ritual conse-*

cration during Hajj or `Umrah). When they came by us, every one of us would let down her gown over her face, and when they had passed on, we would uncover our faces."[12]

(Related by Imâm Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

There is no harm if the face-cover of a female pilgrim touches her face, as she is just forbidden from wearing a *burqu`* or a *niqâb*, not from covering her face with something else. **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** said:

"A female pilgrim should not bother keeping her face-cover separate from her face either with a small piece of wood, or with her hand, or with anything else; the Prophet (PBUH) made the hand and the face of a woman equal in this case (i.e. they are permitted to be uncovered), and both of them should be regarded as the male pilgrim's body, not his head. Moreover, the wives of the Prophet (PBUH) used to cover their faces without having to keep the cover away from their faces."[13]

Ibn Taymiyah also said, *"It is permissible for her (i.e. a female pilgrim) to cover her face with any face-cover that touches the face, provided it is neither a niqâb nor a burqu`."*[14]

Fifth: It is prohibited for a *muhrim* to wear perfume – whether on the body or the clothing of *ihrâm* – or even to use it in food or beverage, for the Prophet (PBUH) said to a man in a state of *ihrâm* to take off his cloak and to wash away the traces of perfume from his body[15]. Likewise, he (PBUH) said to the people about the *muhrim* who fell down from his mount and broke his neck (and died):

"Do not apply any perfume to him."[16]

The idea behind the prohibition of wearing perfume during *ihrâm* is to detach oneself from luxury and worldly ornaments and pleasures, and to draw one's attention to the Hereafter. It is also impermissible for a pilgrim to smell perfumes on purpose or rub the body with a perfumed substance.

Sixth: A *muhrim* is also prohibited to kill game animals, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"O you who have believed, do not kill game while you are in the state of ihrâm..." (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 95)

That is, do not kill game animals while being in a state of *ihrâm* to perform *Hajj* or *`Umrah*. Allah, Exalted be He, also says:

> ***"... But forbidden to you is game from the land as long as you are in the state of ihrâm..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 96)

That is to say, those in a state of *ihrâm* are forbidden to hunt or kill game animals, or help in hunting or slaughtering them. Likewise, it is prohibited for a *muhrim* to eat a game animal which he hunted, which was hunted for him, or which he helped in hunting, as it will be regarded as a dead animal in this case, which is unlawful to eat. Still, it is not prohibited for a *muhrim* to eat fish or animals from the sea, whether he hunts it or anyone else does it for him, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Lawful to you is game from the sea and its food..."***
> (Qur'ân: Al-Mâ'idah: 96)

On the other hand, it is permissible for a *muhrim* to slaughter a domestic animal such as chicken, sheep, and cattle, as they are not game animals. A *muhrim* is also permitted to kill wild inedible animals, such as lions and tigers, for such creatures threaten people's lives.

Generally, if a *muhrim* has to do any of the acts prohibited during *ihrâm* for a legal excuse, he/she is permitted to do it, provided he/she is to slaughter a sacrificial animal in expiation, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...And whoever among you is ill or has an ailment of the head [making shaving necessary must offer] a ransom of fasting [three days] or charity or sacrifice..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 196)

Seventh: A *muhrim* is prohibited to marry (while being in a state of *ihrâm*) or arrange the marriage of another by guardianship, as Imâm Muslim related on the authority of `Uthmân Ibn `Affân that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"A muhrim must neither marry himself, nor arrange the marriage of another one."*[17]

Eighth: A *muhrim* is prohibited to have sexual intercourse, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...So whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihrâm], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 197)

According to Ibn `Abbâs, it refers to the activity of engaging in sexual intercourse[18]. To clarify, if a man in a state of *ihrâm* (i.e. a *muhrim*) has sexual intercourse with his wife before the first release from *ihrâm*, it will invalidate

his *Hajj*. Yet, it is obligatory for him to continue performing the rest of the rites of *Hajj*, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"And complete the Hajj and `Umrah for Allah..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 196)

Still, it is obligatory for such a person to re-perform *Hajj* the following year, and to slaughter a camel or a cow. On the other hand, if a *muhrim* has sexual intercourse with his wife after the first release of *ihrâm*, his *Hajj* is still considered valid, provided that he slaughters a sheep in expiation.

Ninth: A *muhrim* is prohibited to touch his wife (or any woman) lustfully (such as kissing or the like), as these are among the acts that lead to sexual intercourse. Therefore, the *muhrim* must avoid sexual intercourse, lewdness, and dispute, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... So whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihrâm], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 197)

The verse refers to the actual sexual intercourse and any related matter that might lead to it, such as kissing, touching, winking, or talking about sex. **"Disobedience"** in the aforesaid verse means committing sins, which is a grave act to do while being in a state of *ihrâm*, whereas a Muslim is supposed to be in a state of devotion and supplication. As for **"disputing"** which is prohibited for a *muhrim*, it refers to arguing about matters that do not concern one, quarrelling with one's pilgrim mates, insulting others, etc. However, it is permissible for a *muhrim* to argue for the sake of showing the right, enjoining good, or forbidding evil, for argument is a divine command in such cases; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... And argue with them in a way that is best..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: An-Nahl: 125)

It is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) for the *muhrim* to talk less, except in matters of benefit. It is narrated in the Two *Sahîhs*, on the authority of Abû Hurayrah, that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either say something good or keep silent."*[19]

He (PBUH) also said in a *marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth*:

> *"A sign of one's good observance of Islam is leaving alone what does not concern him*[20]*.*

It is also recommended for a *muhrim* to be preoccupied with chanting *talbiyah*, praising Allah, reciting the Qur'ân, enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, and not wasting his time in what is useless. A *muhrim* should also perform *Hajj* devotedly with sincere intention, seeking Allah's great rewards, as the *muhrim* is about to perform a great act of worship and visit great sacred precincts and shrines.

Then, if a *muhrim* reaches Mecca with the intention of *tamattu`*, he is to begin with performing the *`Umrah* rites as follows:

A *muhrim* begins with performing *tawâf* (i.e. circumambulating the Ka`bah) seven times.

Afterwards, he is to offer two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer) which are recommended to be performed at the Standing Place of Ibrâhîm (Abraham) if possible. Otherwise, the *muhrim* can perform them elsewhere in the mosque.

Then, the *muhrim* is to head for As-Safâ to perform *sa`y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah) seven times, starting from As-Safâ and ending at Al-Marwah; the way from the one of them to the other is considered one time and the way back is another. During *sa`y*, a pilgrim is recommended to be preoccupied with supplicating and invoking Allah, Glorified be He.

After finishing the seventh round of *sa`y*, a male pilgrim must shave all his head, and a female pilgrim should cut a small part (equivalent to a fingertip) of the hair of the head.

In this way, a pilgrim will have accomplished the *`Umrah* rites, so he exits the state of *ihrâm* and, thus, is allowed to do all lawful acts that have been prohibited while being in a state of *ihrâm* such as lawful sexual intercourse, wearing perfume, wearing sewn clothes, clipping the fingernails, trimming the moustache, and plucking out the hair of the armpits if necessary. A pilgrim remains in this condition until the Day of *Tarwiyah* (the eighth day of the month of Dhul-Hijjah), then he declares the intention of performing *Hajj*, as will be pointed out in detail later, Allah willing.

As for those *muhrims* who reach Mecca with the intention of performing *qirân* or *ifrâd*, they start with performing the Arrival *Tawâf*, following it with the *sa`y* for *Hajj* (instead of performing it later) if they like. Then, they should keep in the state of *ihrâm* until the Day of Sacrifice, as will be explained later, Allah willing.

Endnotes

1 *Muhrim*: One in a state of ritual consecration during *Hajj* or `*Umrah*.
2 Al-Bukhârî (1816) [4/22] and Muslim (2875) [4/360].
3 The Two *Sahîhs*: The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
4 Al-Bukhârî (1840) [4/72] and Muslim (2881) [4/363].
5 Muslim (2941) [4/411].
6 Al-Bukhârî (1542) [3/505] and Muslim (2783) [4/313].
7 *Khuffs*: Leather socks or shoes or their like.
8 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [26/110 -111].
9 Al-Bukhârî (1841) [4/75] and Muslim (2786) [4/316].
10 Al-Bukhârî (1838) [4/68].
11 "*Tahdhîb As-Sunan*" [2/350 -352].
12 Ahmad (23903) [6/30], Abû Dâwûd (1833) [2/285] and Ibn Mâjah (2935) [3/429].
13 See: *Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ* [26/112].
14 "*Al-Ikhtiyarât Al-Fiqhiyyah*" [p. 174].
15 Al-Bukhârî (1789) [3/774] and Muslim (2790) [4/317].
16 Al-Bukhârî (1265) [3/174] and Muslim (2884) [4/365] and (2889) [4/368].
17 Muslim (3432) [5/196].
18 Ibn Abû Shaybah (13224) [3/173] and (13236) [3/174] and Al-Hâkim (3153) [2/332].
19 Al-Bukhârî (6018) [10/547] and Muslim (172) [1/209].
20 Ahmad (1737) [1/201], At-Tirmidhî (2322) [4/552], and Ibn Mâjah (3976) [4/344].

Rites of *Tarwiyah* and `Arafah Days

Upon reaching the site for *ihrâm* (a state of ritual consecration during Hajj or `*Umrah*), a pilgrim declares his intention to perform one of three types of Hajj (Pilgrimage):

***Ifrâd*:** It means that a pilgrim enters the state of *ihrâm* with the intention of performing Hajj only, keeping in the state of *ihrâm* until he stones *Jamratul-`Aqabah* on the Day of the Feast of Sacrifice (`*Îdul-Adhâ*; on the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah). Then, a pilgrim shaves his head, and performs the *Ifâdah* (Going-forth) *Tawâf* along with *sa`y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah) in case he has not performed it (i.e. *sa`y*) following the Arrival *Tawâf*.

***Qirân*:** It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing both `*Umrah* (Lesser Pilgrimage) and Hajj (Pilgrimage) together. The rites of performing *qirân* are the same as those of performing *ifrâd*, except that a pilgrim is obliged to slaughter a sacrificial animal in the former case.

***Tamattu`*:** It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *`Umrah* only, keeping in such state of *ihrâm* until he finishes the rites of *`Umrah*, such as *tawâf, sa`y*, and shortening or shaving the hair. After that, a pilgrim may get out of the state of *ihrâm* until he assumes another *ihrâm* for performing *Hajj*.

The best of the three forms is *tamattu`*. It is desirable for a pilgrim performing *ifrâd* or *qirân* and has not got a sacrificial animal to change his intention and perform *tamattu`* instead, carrying out all its rites.

It is also desirable for the one performing *tamattu`* (even if it has been *ifrâd* or *qirân* that converted to *tamattu`*), as well as the residents of Mecca and the surrounding places, to assume *ihrâm* for *Hajj* on the Day of *Tarwiyah* (the eighth day of Dhul-Hijjah). This is because Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated, in his description of the Prophet's performance of *Hajj*:

> *"... All the pilgrims dissolved the state of ihrâm except the Prophet (PBUH) and whoever had a sacrificial animal with him. When it was the Day of Tarwiyah, they proceeded to Minâ and assumed ihrâm for Hajj."*[1]

A pilgrim performing *tamattu`* may assume *ihrâm* from the place where he stays, whether in Mecca, Minâ, or any place outside Mecca, but he should not perform *tawâf* after assuming *ihrâm* for *Hajj* (as it has been already performed during *`Umrah*). **Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"On the Day of Tarwiyah, a pilgrim performing tamattu` assumes ihrâm for Hajj and does the same as he did when he has assumed ihrâm for `Umrah from the miqât. The right opinion is that such a pilgrim can assume ihrâm from Mecca or from outside Mecca, for the Prophet's Companions used to assume ihrâm for Hajj from the place enjoined for them by the Prophet (PBUH), namely Al-Bathâ' (in Mecca). Thus, it is an act of the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) for a pilgrim to assume ihrâm (for Hajj) from the place where he stays. Likewise, the people of Mecca can assume ihrâm from Mecca, as the Prophet (PBUH) said, 'And whoever is living within these boundaries can assume ihrâm from his home, and the people of Mecca can assume ihrâm from Mecca.'"*[2 3]

Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) said:

> *"When it was Thursday forenoon, the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions proceeded to Minâ, and those who previously terminated*

their ihrâm declared their intention of a new ihrâm for Hajj. Yet, they did not do this in the mosque, but they assumed ihrâm while Mecca was behind them."[4]

Once a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for *Hajj*, he should then preoccupy himself with chanting *talbiyah* and continually repeat it every now and then, raising his voice with it until he stones *Jamratul-`Aqabah* on the Day of the Feast of Sacrifice (on the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah). Those pilgrims who have assumed their *ihrâm* from Mecca on the Day of *Tarwiyah* should head for Minâ; the optimum time for moving is after the sun has reached its meridian. Then, they perform the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer there, at Minâ, camping there until they perform the rest of the Five Daily Prayers including the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer of the following day (the ninth of Dhul Hijjah). Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

"...The Prophet (PBUH) rode his mount (heading for Minâ) and performed there the Zuhr, the `Asr (Afternoon), the Maghrib (Sunset), the `Ishâ' (Night), and the Fajr (Dawn) Prayers. Then, he (PBUH) stayed there for a while until the sun rose."

It is worth mentioning that spending that time in Minâ (from the noon of the Day of *Tarwiyah* until the dawn of the following day) and performing those five prayers there is an act of the *Sunnah*, not an obligatory one. Likewise, assuming *ihrâm* on the Day of *Tarwiyah* is considered an act of the *Sunnah*. So, it is permissible for a pilgrim to assume *ihrâm* before or after that day.

On the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah and after sunrise, a pilgrim proceeds to `Arafah; the whole area of `Arafah is a standing place except for the valley called Batn `Uranah[5]. Thus, it is sufficient for a pilgrim to stand anywhere on that day within the boundaries of `Arafah, excluding the place pointed out by the Prophet (PBUH), namely Batn `Uranah. The boundaries of `Arafah are clearly distinguished by means of signs, so standing anywhere within these boundaries will be regarded as standing at `Arafah. Still, a pilgrim has to pay attention to these signs in order not to stand outside `Arafah.

When the sun passes its meridian, a pilgrim performs the *Zuhr* (Noon) and the *`Asr* (Afternoon) Prayers, shortening and combining them at the due time of the *Zuhr* Prayer (i.e. performing each as two *rak`ahs* instead of four) with one prayer call (*adhân*) and two immediate prayer calls (*iqâmahs*). We should know that a pilgrim shortens every four-*rak`ah* prayer (i.e. performs it as two *rak`ahs*) at `Arafah, Muzdalifah, and Minâ. However, at `Arafah and Muzdalifah the prayers are to be shortened and combined whereas they are

only shortened at Minâ, i.e. performing each prayer at its due time for there is no need for combining them at Minâ.

After a pilgrim performs the *Zuhr* and the *`Asr* Prayers, shortening and combining them (for he is at `Arafah), he should spend the rest of the day remembering, invoking, glorifying, and praising Allah, seeking His forgiveness, and so on and so forth. This is to be done while a pilgrim is sticking to his place at `Arafah. In other words, a pilgrim does not have to go to the Mount of Ar-Rahmah, or to watch it, or even to face it, while performing such supplications; standing anywhere at `Arafah while facing the direction of the Ka`bah is sufficient.

A pilgrim should spare no effort supplicating Allah and turning to Him in repentance on such a glorious day, whether he is walking, sitting, riding, standing, or even lying down. He should also choose the most comprehensive supplications that were reported to have been observed by the Prophet (PBUH), for he (PBUH) said:

> *"The best supplication is the one on the Day of `Arafah, and the best thing which I and the prophets before me have said is: 'There is no deity but Allah Alone, Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent.' "*[6]

A pilgrim keeps supplicating Allah at `Arafah until sunset. It is impermissible to leave before sunset, and if a pilgrim does, he must go back soon before sunset, to witness it there. However, if a pilgrim leaves `Arafah before sunset and does not go back, he is then obliged to slaughter a sheep of *Hajj* (or to get one seventh of a camel or a cow) and divide it among the poor residents of the Sanctuary of Mecca in expiation for missing an obligatory ritual of *Hajj*.

The Day of `Arafah starts from the noon of the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah until the dawn of the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah (the Day of the Feast of Sacrifice) according to the sound opinion in this regard. As for a pilgrim who is present at `Arafah at daytime, he is obliged to stay there until sunset as we previously said. But if someone arrives at `Arafah at night, it is sufficient for him to stay there for any length of time, even if for only one moment, as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If anyone gets (i.e. stays at) `Arafah before the dawn (of the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah) breaks, then he has performed Hajj."*[7]

Staying at `Arafah is one of the obligatory fundamental rituals of *Hajj*, and it is the most important and the greatest one as well, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Hajj is `Arafah (i.e. staying at `Arafah is the most important ritual of Hajj."*[8]

As for the place of staying at `Arafah, a pilgrim may stand anywhere within the boundaries of `Arafah, and this ritual is deemed invalid if one stands outside them.

May Allah guide us all to the deeds and words He likes and pleases. Verily, He is the Hearing and the Responsive.

Endnotes

1 Muslim (2941) [4/402].
2 Al-Bukhârî (1526) [3/488] and Muslim (2795) [4/321].
3 See: "*Majmû`ul-Fatâwâ*" [26/129].
4 See: "*Zâdul-Ma`âd*" [2/233].
5 Ibn Mâjah (3012) [3/466] and Muslim (2943) [4/422].
6 At-Tirmidhî (3594) [5/572].
7 Abû Dâwûd (1949) [2/332], At-Tirmidhî (889) [3/237], An-Nasâ'î (3016) [3/282], and Ibn Mâjah (3015) [3/468].
8 The Five Compilers of *Hadîth*.

Acts on Muzdalifah and Minâ

When the sun sets on the Day of `Arafah (the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah), pilgrims leave `Arafah setting out for Muzdalifah calmly and tranquilly, for Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"He (the Prophet) kept standing there (at `Arafah) until sunset, when the yellow light had somewhat gone, and the disc of the sun had disappeared. He (PBUH) then mounted Usâmah behind him, and pulled the reins of Al-Qaswâ' (the name of his she-camel) so forcefully that its head touched the saddle (in order to keep it under full control), and he (PBUH) pointed to the people with his right hand saying, 'O people! Be moderate (in speed)! Be moderate!' "*

Thus, pilgrims must be in a state of tranquility and serenity while leaving `Arafah and heading for Muzdalifah, avoiding jostling against their fellow pilgrims, pushing them, or disturbing them with their cars. A pilgrim should also have mercy on the walking weak and old people at such a crowd. It is

desirable for pilgrims to keep asking Allah's forgiveness while departing from `Arafah (heading for Muzdalifah), for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Then depart from the place from where [all] the people depart and ask forgiveness of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Me rciful."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 199)

Linguistically, the word "*muzdalifah*" (i.e., close) is an adjective derived from the Arabic word "*izdilâf*" which means closeness, and Muzdalifah is so-called because when leaving `Arafah, the pilgrims become closer to it. Muzdalifah is also referred to as "Jam`" (i.e. gathering), as pilgrims gather there. It is called Al-Mash`ar Al-Harâm (the Sacred Landmark) as well. In his volume entitled *Al-Mughnî*[1] (*the Sufficient*), **Ibn Qudâmah**, an eminent Hanbalî scholar said, *"Muzdalifah has three names: Muzdalifah (i.e. close), Jam` (i.e. gathering), and Al-Mash`ar Al-Harâm (i.e. the Sacred Landmark)."*

A pilgrim should keep on remembering Allah all through his way from `Arafah to Muzdalifah, supplicating Him devoutly, for a pilgrim at that stage is still shifting from one ritual to the other. Upon arriving at Muzdalifah, a pilgrim is to perform the *Maghrib* (Sunset) and the *`Ishâ'* (Night) Prayers, shortening the *`Ishâ'* to two *rak`ah*s and combining them with one prayer call and two immediate prayer calls (one for each) before encamping. To illustrate, Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him), in his description of the Prophet's performance of *Hajj*, narrated:

> *"... When he (PBUH) reached Muzdalifah, he performed the Maghrib (Sunset) and the `Ishâ' (Night) Prayers, with one prayer call (adhân) and two immediate prayer calls (iqâmahs) (i.e. one for each)."*[2]

A pilgrim then encamps at Muzdalifah and offers the *Fajr* Prayer at its due time, for Jâbir narrated:

> *"...Allah's Messenger (PBUH) then lay down until dawn and offered the Fajr Prayer with one prayer call and one immediate prayer call when the morning light was clear."*[3]

It is worth mentioning that a pilgrim may stay anywhere at Muzdalifah, as the whole area between the two bottlenecks of `Arafah and to Batn Muhassir[4] (excluding the valley of Batn Muhassir itself) is called Al-Mash`ar Al-Harâm (the Sacred Landmark), as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"All Muzdalifah is a standing place, but be away from Batn Muhassir."*[5]

It is an act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) to spend the night at Muzdalifah and offer the *Fajr* Prayer at its due time. After that, while standing at Muzdalifah, a pilgrim keeps on supplicating Allah until the daylight spreads. Then, before sunrise, a pilgrim proceeds to Minâ. As regards feeble pilgrims, such as old people, women, children and the like, as well as those who take care of them, they are allowed to head for Minâ after midnight or when the moon disappears, instead of waiting at Muzdalifah until dawn. However, healthy pilgrims who do not have any weak people with them should not leave Muzdalifah before offering the *Fajr* Prayer, and they should stay until the daylight spreads.

Spending the night at Muzdalifah is one of the duties of *Hajj*. A pilgrim who enters Muzdalifah before midnight must not leave before dawn. As for a pilgrim who arrives there after midnight, it is sufficient for him to spend any length of time there. Still, it is much better in the latter case to stay until dawn, offering the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer and following it with supplicating Allah. **Ibn Qudâmah** stated in his book entitled '*Al-Mughnî*'[6] (*the Sufficient*):

> *"There is no harm on the one who arrives at Muzdalifah in the second half of the night, and the previous ruling related to arriving at the first half of the night (which obligates staying at Muzdalifah until dawn) will not be applicable to him."*

It is permissible for those pilgrims who have legal excuses, such as sick people who need to be hospitalized and those helping them, as well as shepherds and water providers, not to spend the night at Muzdalifah, as the Prophet (PBUH) gave permission to shepherds not to spend the night at Muzdalifah[7]. According to the above, spending the night at Muzdalifah is obligatory for all pilgrims who enter Muzdalifah before midnight, because the Prophet (PBUH) spent the night there, and we should follow his *Sunnah*, as he (PBUH) said:

> *"Learn your rituals from me (by seeing me performing them)."*[8]

So, leaving Muzdalifah (and heading for Minâ) after midnight is permissible only for those who have legal excuses, as indicated in *hadîths*.

Afterwards, a pilgrim heads for Minâ shortly before sunrise (of the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah, i.e. the Day of Sacrifice), as `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The polytheists did not use to depart (from Jam`, i.e. Muzdalifah) until the sun had risen, and they used to say, 'Let the sun shine on*

you, O Thabîr (a mountain in Mecca which overlooks Muzdalifah), so as to let us depart.' Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) contradicted them and departed (from Muzdalifah) before sunrise."[9]

Pilgrims should leave in a state of tranquility and calmness, but when they pass through the valley called Baṯn Muẖassir, they should go faster. It is preferable for a pilgrim to pick up the pebbles, with which he intends to do the ritual of stoning, while he is on his way to Minâ. Still, it is permissible for a pilgrim to pick them up from Muzdalifah, Minâ or elsewhere, as Ibn `Abbâs, (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

"In the morning of the Day of Al-`Aqabah (the day of throwing the pebbles at Jamratul-`Aqabah), Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said to me, 'Pick up pebbles for me.' I picked up seven pebbles for him as large as beans. He (PBUH) then started shaking them while saying, 'You should throw pebbles as large as these ones.' Then, the Prophet (PBUH) said, 'O people! Beware of excessiveness in religion, for those (nations) before you were ruined because of excessiveness in religion.' "[10]

Thus, pebbles should be as large as beans, i.e. slightly bigger than chickpeas. It should be noted that it is insufficient to use anything other than small pebbles or to use stones for this purpose, for the Prophet (PBUH) used small pebbles (as large as beans) for stoning. So, we have to follow in the Prophet's footsteps, as he (PBUH) said:

"Learn your rituals from me (by seeing me performing them)."

Upon reaching Minâ, which is between the valley called Baṯn Muẖassir and *Jamratul-`Aqabah*, pilgrims are to head for *Jamratul-`Aqabah* (the nearest *Jamrah* to Mecca which is called the Great *Jamrah*) and stone it with seven consecutive pebbles. The time for stoning is after sunrise, and extends until sunset. Each pebble should be thrown into the throwing place (the fenced area surrounding the pillar), whether it settles there or not after falling inside. A pilgrim should point at the fence while throwing the pebbles, not at the pillar itself, for it is not built to be stoned, but to help as a sign showing the throwing place. So, it is insufficient if a pilgrim throws a pebble at the pillar and then it falls outside the fenced area.

It is permissible for the weak pilgrims and those who have valid excuses to throw the pebbles at *Jamratul-`Aqabah* after midnight. It is also permissible

for healthy pilgrims to delay stoning until midnight, yet it is not desirable for them.

It is an act of the *Sunnah* to start throwing pebbles at *Jamratul-`Aqabah* as soon as a pilgrim arrives at Minâ and before doing anything else, for it is regarded as a sign of greeting to Minâ. On the other hand, it is desirable for a pilgrim to utter *takbîr*[11] upon throwing each pebble, saying:

> *"O Allah! Make it an accepted Hajj of ours that serves as a pardon for our sins."*

It is important to point out that a pilgrim should by no means throw pebbles at any *jamrah* other than *Jamratul-`Aqabah* on the Day of Sacrifice (the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah), as this ritual is restricted to *Jamratul-`Aqabah* on that day.

After stoning *Jamratul-`Aqabah*, it is preferable for a pilgrim who performs *Hajj* as *tamattu`* or *qirân* to slaughter the obligatory sacrificial animal. Such a pilgrim has to buy a sacrificial animal to slaughter and distribute its meat among the poor, keeping a share for himself to eat from.

Afterwards, a pilgrim shaves his head or cuts his hair short, yet shaving is better, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... With your heads shaved and [hair] shortened..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Fath: 27)

Moreover, Ibn `Umar narrated:

> *"The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) got his head shaved during the Farewell Hajj."*[12]

The Prophet (PBUH) invoked Allah three times to be merciful to those who have their head shaved, and invoked Him only once to be merciful to those who got their hair cut short[13]. If a pilgrim chooses to shorten his hair, then he must shorten all his hair and not only some of it, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... With your heads shaved and [hair] shortened..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Fath: 27)

The aforementioned verse indicates that shaving or cutting should be applied to the whole head, not only some or certain parts of it. As for a female pilgrim, she should only shorten her hair by cutting a small part equivalent to

a fingertip of each hair braid (or of the tips of her hair). This is because it was narrated by Ibn `Abbâs that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Shaving (the hair) is not a duty laid on (pilgrim) women; only clipping their hair is incumbent on them."*[14]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd, At-Tabarânî and Ad-Dâraqutnî)

Another reason is that shaving a woman's head is in fact a sort of disfigurement for her. It is worth mentioning that if a female pilgrim does not have her hair braided, she may gather it and clip a part equivalent to a fingertip.

It is also an act of the *Sunnah* for a pilgrim who shaves or cuts his hair short to clip his fingernails, shorten his mustache, shave his pubic hair and pluck out the hair of the armpits. However, it is forbidden for a pilgrim (or any Muslim) to shave his beard or cut it short,[15] as the Prophet (PBUH) enjoined growing the beard and forbade shaving it off or cutting it short, and Muslims should obey the Prophet's commands and avoid what he forbade, especially pilgrims, who are undergoing such a glorious act of worship. In the case of a bald man who has little or no hair at all, it is desirable to pass a razor over his head as if he is shaving his head, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"If I command you to do something, then do (of) it as much as you can."*

After stoning *Jamratul-`Aqabah* and shaving or cutting the hair short, a pilgrim becomes in a state of semi-consecration, namely the first (partial) release of *ihrâm*. That is to say, a pilgrim at this stage is partially released from the state of *ihrâm*, and everything becomes lawful for him, such as wearing sewn clothes, wearing perfume, etc., except for having sexual intercourse with his wife. To illustrate, `A'ishah (the Prophet's wife, may Allah be pleased with her) said:

> *"When one of you throws pebbles at Jamratul-`Aqabah, everything becomes lawful for him except women (i.e. sexual intercourse)."*[16]

She also said:

> *"I applied perfume consisting of musk to Allah's Messenger (PBUH) once before he assumed ihrâm, and once on the Day of Sacrifice before circumambulating the House (i.e. the Ka`bah)."*[17]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

A pilgrim reaches this first (partial) release of *ihrâm* after fulfilling two of the following three rituals:

- Throwing the pebbles at *Jamratul-`Aqabah*
- Having the hair shaved or shortened
- Performing *Ifâdah* (Going-forth) *Tawâf* followed by *sa`y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah) for those obliged to perform *sa`y*

However, the second (complete) release of *ihrâm* is achieved after performing all the aforesaid three rituals; when a pilgrim fulfils them, everything that was unlawful due to *ihrâm* becomes lawful for him, even sexual intercourse.

After throwing the pebbles at *Jamratul-`Aqabah*, slaughtering the sacrificial animal, and shaving or shortening the hair, a pilgrim then proceeds to Mecca to perform *Ifâdah* (Going-forth) *Tawâf*. After that, a pilgrim performs *sa`y* if he is performing *Hajj* as *tamattu`*, or as *qirân* or *ifrâd* but he has not performed it following the Arrival *Tawâf*. Yet, if a pilgrim is performing *Hajj* as *qirân* or *ifrâd* and has already performed *sa`y* following the Arrival *Tawâf*, then he does not have to perform another *sa`y* after *Ifâdah Tawâf*.

These four rituals are to be performed in the following order, if possible; stoning *Jamratul-`Aqabah*, slaughtering the sacrificial animal, shaving or shortening the hair, and performing the *Ifâdah Tawâf* followed by *sa`y*. Performing these rituals in this order is an act of the *Sunnah*, so there is no sin on a pilgrim if he has to perform them in a way other than the aforesaid order. This is because on the Farewell *Hajj* (the Prophet's one and only Pilgrimage) whenever a pilgrim violated that order of rituals and told him, he (PBUH) replied, *"Do it and there is no harm (sin)."*[18] However, sticking to this order is better, for the Prophet (PBUH) performed them in that way[19].

As for *tawâf* (circumambulating the Ka`bah), a pilgrim has to start it from the Black Stone, standing aligned with it, and kissing it if possible, or touching it with his right hand. If this is unavailable due to the huge throng of pilgrims, it is sufficient for a pilgrim just to wave to the Black Stone instead, without pushing others or thronging to reach it. From the Black Stone as a starting point, a pilgrim begins the first round of *tawâf* (circumambulation) counterclockwise, keeping the Ka`bah on his left and occupying himself with supplications, the remembrance of Allah, and the recitation of the Qur'ân.

Upon reaching the Yamânî (the Yemeni) Corner,[20] a pilgrim should touch it if possible, but not kiss it, and recite (when being between the Yamânî Corner and the Black Stone):

"Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire." (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 201)

By reaching the Black Stone again, a pilgrim will have completed one full round of *tawâf*. Then, a pilgrim approaches and kisses the Black Stone or at least waves to it, and starts the second round, and so on, until he finishes seven rounds.

There are thirteen prerequisites for the validity of *tawâf* (circumambulation) as follows:

1- Being a Muslim

2- Being sane

3- Having the intention of performing *tawâf*

4- Concealing one's *'awrah*[21]

5- Being in a state of (ritual and physical) purity

6- Completing seven rounds of circumambulation

7- Circumambulating counterclockwise, keeping the Ka`bah on one's left

8- Circumambulating the whole Ka`bah, avoiding passing through *Hijr* Ismâ`îl (Ishmael's Precinct)[22] or ascending it and walking on its crest

9- Circumambulating on foot, if possible

10- Observing succession while performing the seven rounds of *tawâf*, unless there is a call for a prayer or there is a Funeral Prayer to perform. In such cases, a pilgrim is to interrupt his *tawâf* and offer the prayer, then he resumes *tawâf* from where he has stopped and completes the remaining rounds.

11- Circumambulating within the borders of Al-Masjid Al-Harâm (the Sacred Mosque)

12- Beginning each round of *tawâf* at the Black Stone

13- Ending the round at the Black Stone as well

After performing the *Ifâdah* (Going-forth) *Tawâf*, it is a confirmed act of the *Sunnah* for a pilgrim to offer two *rak`ahs* (units of prayer); they are recommended to be performed at the Standing Place of Ibrâhîm (Abraham) if possible. Otherwise, a pilgrim may perform them elsewhere in the Sacred

Mosque or Al-Haram (the Sanctuary). It is an act of the *Sunnah* to recite the Sura of *Al-Kâfirûn* (*the Disbelievers*)[23] in the first *rak'ah*, and the Sura of *Al-Ikhlâs* (*Sincerity of Faith*)[24] in the second, and each to be recited following *Al-Fâtihah (the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ân)*. Afterwards, a pilgrim heads towards As-Safâ to perform *sa'y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah). When a pilgrim first reaches As-Safâ he ascends it, says, "*Allahu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest) thrice, and then says:

> *"There is no deity but Allah Alone Who has no partner. To Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs (all) praise; He gives life and causes death, and He is the Ever-Living Who never dies; in His Hand is (all) good, and He is over all things Omnipotent."*

After that, a pilgrim descends the hill of As-Safâ and heads for Al-Marwah starting the first round. While so doing, a pilgrim is to walk at a normal pace but to jog when being between the two green marked posts, and then a pilgrim continues walking normally towards the hill of Al-Marwah. When a pilgrim reaches Al-Marwah, he ascends it and repeats what he has said on As-Safâ; by so doing, the first round is completed. Then, he descends Al-Marwah heading for As-Safâ, ensuring walking where walking is designated and jogging where jogging is designated. The pilgrim continues this procedure until he completes seven rounds ending at Al-Marwah; going from As-Safâ to Al-Marwah is a round and returning is another.

While performing *sa'y* (going between As-Safâ and Al-Marwah), it is desirable for a pilgrim to be occupied with making supplications, reciting the Qur'ân, and mentioning and remembering Allah. There is no particular supplication to be made during *sa'y*, so one may make any supplication he likes.

As for the conditions of the validity of *sa'y*, they are as follows:

1- Having the intention of performing *sa'y*

2- Completing seven full rounds beginning from As-Safâ and ending at Al-Marwah

3- Having performed *tawâf* before *sa'y*

Endnotes

1 *Al-Mughnî* [5/83].
2 Muslim.
3 Muslim.
4 Batn Muhassir: A valley between Muzdalifah and Minâ.
5 Abû Dâwûd (1907) [2/318], An-Nasâ'î (3045) [3/292] and Ibn Mâjah (3048) [3/483].
6 *Al-Mughnî* [5/286].
7 Abû Dâwûd (1975) [2/341], At-Tirmidhî (956) [3/289], An-Nasâ'î (3069) [3/301], and Ibn Mâjah (3037) [3/479].
8 Muslim (3124) [5/49] and An-Nasâ'î (3062) [3/298].
9 Al-Bukhârî (1684) [3/671] and Ibn Mâjah (3022) [3/472].
10 An-Nasâ'î (3057) [3/296] and Ibn Mâjah (3029) [3/476].
11 *Takbîr*: Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).
12 Al-Bukhârî (4410) [8/137] and Muslim (3138) [5/57].
13 Al-Bukhârî (1727) [3/708] and Muslim (3132) [5/55].
14 Abû Dâwûd (1984) [2/344], Ad-Dâraqutnî (2640) [2/239], and Ad-Dârimî (1882) [1/493].
15 Al-Bukhârî (5892) [10/428] and Muslim (601) [2/142].
16 Sa`id Ibn Mansûr in his "*As-Sunan*", Abû Dâwûd (1978) [2/342], and Ad-Dâraqutnî (2660) [2/243].
17 Al-Bukhârî (1539) [3/499] and Muslim (2833) [4/340].
18 Al-Bukhârî (83) [1/237] and Muslim (3143) [5/59].
19 Muslim (3139) [5/57].
20 The Yamânî (the Yemeni) Corner: The southern corner of the Ka`bah that faces Yemen.
21 `*Awrah*: The private parts or parts of the body which are illegal to expose to others; a male's `*awrah* is from the navel to the knees, whereas in another view it is said to be the external organs of sex and excretion. As for a female's `*awrah*, it includes all her body in one view whereas in another it is all her body with the exception of her face and hands.
22 *Hijr* Ismâ`îl (Ishmael's Precinct): The semi-circular short wall located a few meters east of the Ka`bah and considered part of it.
23 Chapter No. 109 of the Qur'ân.
24 Chapter No. 112 of the Qur'ân.

Days of *Tashrîq*[1] and Farewell *Tawâf*

After the completion of the *Ifâdah* (Going-Forth) *Tawâf*, it is obligatory for a pilgrim to return to Minâ on the Feast Day[2] and to spend the night there, as Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) did not grant anyone (of the pilgrims) permission to spend the night at Mecca (during the nights of Minâ) except for Al-`Abbâs, as he used to provide water for the pilgrims (to drink)."*[3]

Thus, a pilgrim is to spend the night of that day at Minâ, remaining there for three nights if he is not in a hurry. Otherwise, if a pilgrim is in a hurry, he may stay there only for two nights: the eleventh and the twelfth of Dhul-Hijjah. At that time, a pilgrim is to shorten all the prayers without combining them; each prayer is to be performed at its due time.

A pilgrim has to throw pebbles at each of the three *Jamrahs* of Minâ on each of the Days of *Tashrîq*. Throwing pebbles is to be performed when the sun declines (i.e. at noon), as Jâbir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) threw pebbles on the Day of Sacrifice at mid-morning, and after that (i.e. on the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth of Dhul-Hijjah) (he used to throw pebbles) when the sun had declined."*[4]
>
> (Related by the Group of Compilers of *Hadîth*)

Moreover, Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"We used to wait until the sun declined and then we would throw the pebbles."*[5]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Abû Dâwûd)

This shows that the Prophet and his Companions used to observe the appropriate time for throwing pebbles, so pilgrims should follow in the Prophet's footsteps, as he (PBUH) said:

> *"Learn your rituals from me (by seeing me performing them)."*

Thus, the appropriate time for throwing pebbles on the three Days of *Tashrîq* (the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth of Dhul-Hijjah) is after the sun declines; it is insufficient to throw the pebbles before that time; rather, we should follow the example of the Prophet (PBUH) who said:

> *"Learn your rituals from me (by seeing me performing them)."*

All acts of worship must be performed at the time specified by the Prophet (PBUH) in his *Sunnah*. For example, prayer has specific times at which it is to be performed; otherwise, it is impermissible. Likewise, throwing the pebbles has to be performed at the times specified by the Prophet (PBUH).

The great Muslim scholar, **Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim** (may Allah have mercy on him), in his description of the Prophet's (PBUH) way of throwing pebbles as stated in the honorable *Sunnah*, said:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) returned to Minâ after performing the Ifâdah Tawâf, and spent the night there. In the morning, he (PBUH) waited until the sun declined and then he took his camel, without riding it, and headed for the First Jamrah which is next to the Mosque of Al-Khayf, and began to stone it. He (PBUH) stoned it with seven consecutive pebbles, saying,* "Allâhu-Akbar" *(i.e. Allah is the Greatest)*

upon throwing each pebble. After that, he (PBUH) approached it (the First Jamrah) until he became so near, and then he faced the qiblah, raised his hands and kept supplicating Allah for quite a long time approximately equivalent to the time taken to recite the Sura of Al-Baqarah (the Cow)[6]*. Afterwards, he (PBUH) moved towards the Middle Jamrah and stoned it in the same way. Then, he moved leftwards near the valley, faced the qiblah, raised his hands, staying at the bottom of the valley and standing so that the House (i.e. the Ka`bah) was on his left and Minâ on his right, and stoned the Last Jamrah (Jamratul-`Aqabah) with seven pebbles as well..."*[7].

Ibnul-Qayyim continued:

"...After he (PBUH) had finished stoning (the Last Jamrah; Jamratul-`Aqabah), he hurried back without stopping there to supplicate. It was said that he did not stop there because of the huge throng of pilgrims. It was also said, and this is the most valid opinion, that the Prophet (PBUH) used to stop to make supplication during the act of worship itself (as he did at the First Jamrah and the Middle Jamrah). So, when he finished stoning the Last Jamrah (Jamratul-`Aqabah), he thus finished performing the act of worship, namely throwing the pebbles (so he did not stop there to supplicate Allah), bearing in mind that making supplication during an act of worship is better than doing after finishing it. This is just like the case of making supplications during prayers; the Prophet (PBUH) used to make supplications during prayer itself, not after finishing it."[8]

Thus, throwing the pebbles has to be performed in the following order: A pilgrim should start with the First *Jamrah* which is the nearest to Minâ and Al-Khayf Mosque, then the one that follows it namely the Middle *Jamrah*, and finally the Last *Jamrah* (*Jamratul-`Aqabah*, which is also called 'the Great *Jamrah*'), the last of the three *Jamrahs* nearest to Mecca. A pilgrim should throw seven consecutive pebbles at each *Jamrah*, raising his hands upon each throw and saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest). In addition, each pebble should be thrown into the throwing place (the fenced area surrounding the pillar) whether it settles or not after falling inside; it is insufficient if a pebble falls outside it, and another pebble has to be thrown in compensation.

As for pilgrims who cannot throw the pebbles themselves due to sickness or old age, as well as pregnant women and those women who might be harmed by the throng of pilgrims, it is permissible for them to ask someone else to

throw the pebbles on their behalf. The one who performs stoning on behalf of another can throw the pebbles for himself and for the other pilgrim at the same place. In other words, he is not obligated to stone all *Jamarh*s firstly for himself then return to the First *Jamrah* to start stoning on behalf of the other pilgrim, as this will be very difficult and exhausting due to the huge throngs; and Allah Knows best. If the one performing stoning by proxy is performing the obligation of *Hajj* for the first time, then, at each *Jamrah*, he has to throw his own pebbles before throwing those of the other pilgrim.

Having finished stoning on the twelfth of Dhul-Hijjah, a pilgrim is free either to return to Mecca before sunset or to spend the night (of the twelfth of Dhul-Hijjah) in Minâ, and throw pebbles at the three *Jamrahs* on the following day, the thirteenth, after the sun declines (at noon). Yet, the latter choice is better, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"...Then whoever hastens [his departure] in two days - there is no sin upon him; and whoever delays [until the third] - there is no sin upon him - for him who fears Allah..."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 203)

On the twelfth of Dhul-Hijjah, if the sun sets while a pilgrim is still in Minâ, then he must spend the night there and do the pebble throwing on the following day, as Almighty Allah says, as mentioned above:

> ***"... Then whoever hastens [his departure] in two days - there is no sin upon him..."*** (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 203)

"Day" here means "daytime" and does not mean "night."

If a female pilgrim has menstruated or has a postpartum period after or before assuming *ihrâm*, she remains in her *ihrâm*. She can perform all the rites of *Hajj* as other pilgrims do, such as standing at 'Arafah, spending the night at Muzdalifah, throwing the pebbles, and spending the nights at Minâ. Still, it is impermissible for her in such cases to perform *tawâf* or *sa'y* unless she purifies herself from the state of major ritual impurity. However, if she has menstruated after performing *tawâf*, it is permissible for her to perform *sa'y*, as ritual purity is not a prerequisite for *sa'y*.

If a pilgrim desires to return to his home country or elsewhere after finishing all the rites of *Hajj* and prepared for traveling, just before leaving Mecca he has to perform the Farewell *Tawâf* so as to be the last thing done in Mecca. Again, a menstruating pilgrim is exempted from performing the

Farewell *Tawâf*, so she can travel without doing it, as Ibn `Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"The people (i.e. pilgrims) were commanded (by the Prophet) to perform the Farewell Tawâf around the House (the Ka`bah) as the last thing to do before leaving (Mecca), yet menstruating women were exempted."*[9]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

He also narrated that when the Prophet (PBUH) saw the pilgrims departing from Mecca, he (PBUH) said to them:

> *"None amongst you should depart until he performs the Farewell Tawâf around the House (i.e. the Ka`bah) as the last thing to do (at Mecca)."*[10]
>
> (Related by Imâms Ahmad, Muslim, Abû Dâwûd, and Ibn Mâjah)

Moreover, Ibn `Abbâs narrated:

> *"The Prophet (PBUH) gave permission to menstruating women to depart from (Mecca) without performing the Farewell Tawâf around the House (i.e. the Ka`bah) provided that they have already performed the Ifâdah (Going-forth) Tawâf."*[11]
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad)

Furthermore, `Â'ishah (the Prophet's wife, may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

> *"Safiyyah Bint Huyayy menstruated after performing the Ifâdah Tawâf, so I made a mention of her menses to Allah's Messenger (PBUH), whereupon he remarked, 'Well, then she will detain us.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, she has performed the Ifâdah Tawâf and circumambulated the House, and it was after that when she menstruated.' Thereupon, he (PBUH) said, '(If so), then she may depart.'"*[12]
>
> (Related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim)

Endnotes

1 The Days of *At-Tashrîq*: The eleventh, the twelfth, and the thirteenth of Dhul-Hijjah, i.e. the three days following the Day of Sacrifice.
2 The Day of Sacrifice (*'Îdul-Adhâ*); the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah).
3 Ibn Mâjah (3069) [3/492].
4 Muslim (3128) [5/52], Abû Dâwûd (1971) [2/340], At-Tirmidhî (894) [3/241], An-Nasâ'î (3063) [3/298], and Ibn Mâjah (3/305) [3/485].
5 Al-Bukhârî (1746) [3/731] and Abû Dâwûd (1972) [2/340].
6 The second Chapter of the Qur'ân.
7 See: "*Zâdul-Ma'âd*" [2/285].
8 See: "*Zâdul-Ma'âd*" [2/286].
9 Al-Bukhârî (1755) [3/738] and Muslim (3207) [5/84].
10 Ahmad (1936) [1/223], Muslim (3206) [5/84], Abû Dâwûd (2002) [2/349], and Ibn Mâjah (3070) [3/493].
11 Ahmad (3505) [1/369].
12 Al-Bukhârî (1762) [3/740] and Muslim (3209) [5/85].

Sacrificial Animals (*Hady* and *Udhiyah*)

Hady refers to a legally edible animal (such as a camel, a cow or a sheep) brought to the Sacred Mosque, slaughtered there, and sacrificed for the Sake of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He.

Udhiyah refers to a legally edible animal slaughtered and sacrificed on the Day of Sacrifice or the Days of *Tashrîq* for the sake of attaining the closeness and the pleasure of Allah.

There is an agreement among Muslim scholars on the prescription of offering a sacrificial animal for the Sake of Allah. For instance, **Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim** said:

> *"Offering a sacrificial animal for the Sake of Allah, the Creator, is regarded as a sacrifice for one's own self as one's self tends to fall into ruin by sinning. Allah, Exalted be He, says, '...* ***And for all religion***

We have appointed a rite [of sacrifice] that they may mention the Name of Allah over what He has provided for them of [sacrificial] animals...' (Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 34) *Moreover, the slaughtering of sacrificial animals and the shedding of their blood while mentioning the Name of Allah over them are legislated in all religions."*

The best sacrificial animal to offer is a camel, then a cow, then a sheep. It is better if a camel or a cow is offered by an individual, as it will be a sign of one's generosity, and it will also be more beneficial for the poor due to the amount of meat they have. On the other hand, the best animal to sacrifice is the fattest, then the most expensive, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"... And whoever honors the symbols [i.e. rites] of Allah- indeed, it is from the piety of hearts." (Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 32)

It is insufficient to offer a sacrificial animal before it reaches the prescribed age for being slaughtered, which is six months for a sheep, five years for a camel, two years for a cow, and one year for a goat.

A ewe is good enough to be offered as *hady* on behalf of one man, and as *udhiyah* on behalf of one man and his household. A camel or a cow is sufficient as *hady* or *udhiyah* on behalf of seven people according to the *hadîth* narrated by Jâbir that states:

"Allah's Messenger (PBUH) commanded us to become seven partners (in the sacrifice) of a camel or a cow."[1]

Abû Ayyûb (may Allah be pleased with him) also narrated:

"In the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH), a person used to sacrifice a ewe on behalf of himself and his household; and they would eat (from it) and feed (others)."[2]

(Related by Ibn Mâjah and At-Tirmidhî who deemed it *sahîh*)

Yet, it is important to point out that it is better to slaughter a single ewe than to have seven persons share in slaughtering a camel or a cow.

It is a condition that a sacrificial animal, whether *hady* or *udhiyah*, must be free from all physical defects. Thus, it is insufficient to offer a skinny or a sick animal as sacrifice. Likewise, it is insufficient to sacrifice a blind animal, a one-eyed animal, or a lame animal that can hardly walk. A mad animal, a toothless one, or a very old one with very small or dry udders, are not acceptable as sacrifice as well; the same goes for an animal which is obviously sick, for

Al-Barâ' Ibn `Âzib (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Four (types of animals) are impermissible to be offered as sacrifice: a one-eyed animal which has obviously lost the sight of one eye, a sick animal which is obviously sick, a lame animal which obviously limps, and an animal with a broken leg and no marrow."*[3]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd and An-Nasâ'î)

According to the most valid opinion, the optimum time for slaughtering a sacrificial animal, whether it is *u<u>dh</u>iyah* or *hady* offered by one performing *<u>H</u>ajj* as *tammatu`*, is during the period from after the Feast (*`Îd*) Prayer until the last of the Days of *Tashrîq*. It is preferable for one to eat from the sacrificial animal one offers as *u<u>dh</u>iyah*, or *hady* in case of performing *<u>H</u>ajj* as *tammatu`* or *qirân*; its meat is divided as follows: one third for the owner, one third to be given as gifts, and one third to be given in charity, as Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... So eat of them and feed the miserable and poor."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Al-<u>H</u>ajj: 28)

As for a pilgrim who is offering expiatory *hady* (in expiation for missing any of the essential rituals of *<u>H</u>ajj* or for committing something forbidden while in a state of *i<u>h</u>râm*), he must not eat any of it at all. If one wants to offer a sacrificial animal, one should by no means cut any of one's hair or trim any of one's nails from the first day of Dhul-<u>H</u>ijjah until one offers the sacrificial animal, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"When it is the beginning of Dhul-<u>H</u>ijjah and anyone of you intends to offer a sacrificial animal, he should not get any of his hair cut or nails trimmed until he offers it."*[4]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim)

In case one does (i.e. one has trimmed one's hair or nails), one must seek the forgiveness of Allah, yet one is not obliged to offer anything in expiation in this case.

Endnotes

1 Muslim (3173) [5/71].
2 At-Tirmidhî (1509) [4/91] and Ibn Mâjah (3147) [3/541].
3 Abû Dâwûd (2802) [3/161], At-Tirmidhî (1501) [4/85], An-Nasâ'î (4381) [4/244], and Ibn Mâjah (3144) [3/539).
4 Muslim (5089) [7/139].

`*Aqîqah* (Sacrificial Animal for the Newborn)

`*Aqîqah* is one of the duties of a father toward his newborn child. It is the slaughtering of a sacrificial animal as a sign of gratefulness to Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, for granting one a child. Offering `*aqîqah* is considered a confirmed act of the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), as the Prophet (PBUH) offered sacrificial animals as `*aqîqah* when his grandsons Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn were born, as related by Abû Dâwûd and other compilers of *Hadîth*[1]. Also, the Prophet's honorable Companions and their followers used to offer sacrificial animals as `*aqîqah* for their newborn children.

Some scholars are of the view that `*aqîqah* is obligatory, for Al-Hasan narrated on the authority of Samurah that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

"Every (newborn) boy is pawned by the `aqîqah offered for him."[2]

Imâm Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, in explaining this *hadîth*, said, "*Pawned here means that (if he dies as a baby) he can intercede with Allah in favor of his parents*

who offered `aqîqah on the occasion of his birth."* **Imâm Ibnul-Qayyim said,** *"A child grows up good-natured and well-mannered if `aqîqah is offered on the occasion of his/her birth."

According to the most valid opinion in this connection, *`aqîqah* is a confirmed act of the *Sunnah*. Moreover, sacrificing an animal as *`aqîqah* is much better than giving its value in charity.

`Aqîqah is a sign of the parents' gratitude to Allah for blessing them with a newborn baby. It is also a means of drawing oneself near to Almighty Allah, being charitable to the poor, and spiritually ransoming the newborn child.

Two equal ewes, with nearly the same age and shape, are to be sacrificed as *`aqîqah* for a newborn boy, whereas one ewe is to be sacrificed for a newborn girl. Umm Korz Al-Ka`biyyah narrated that she had heard the Prophet (PBUH) saying:

> *"Two equal ewes are to be sacrificed for the (newborn) boy and one ewe is to be sacrificed for a (newborn) girl."*[3]
>
> (Related by Imâm Ahmad and At-Tirmidhî who deemed it *sahîh* (authentic) according to a *hadîth* narrated by `Â'ishah)

The difference in the number of the sacrificial animals offered as *`aqîqah* for males and females is due to the fact that a male's portion of inheritance in Islam is equal to that of two females. Moreover, the happiness of a father whom Allah grants a boy is usually much greater than the case of being granted a girl; this is why *`aqîqah*, which is offered as a sign of gratitude to Allah, is double in case of a newborn boy.

Regarding the time of offering *`aqîqah*, it is preferable to be on the seventh day after the child's birth. However, it is permissible to offer it before or after that day. It is also more preferable to name the child on that day, as it is stated in the *Sunan* and other books of *Hadîth* that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Sacrifice is made for him (the newborn baby) on the seventh day and he is to be named as well (on that day)."*[4]

It is permissible, however, to name the child on the day of his/her birth, for some scholars maintain that this is more preponderant than naming the child on the seventh day of his/her birth.

On the other hand, it is an act of the *Sunnah* to give the child a good name, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"(On the Day of Resurrection,) you will be called by your names and by your father's names, so give yourselves good names."*[5]
>
> (Related by Abû Dâwûd)

The Prophet (PBUH) liked good names,[6] and forbade giving children names suggesting worshipping other than Allah,[7] such as calling a child "`Abdul-Ka`bah" (servant of the Ka`bah), "`Abdun-Nabî" (servant of the Prophet), "`Abdul-Masîh" (servant of Jesus), "`Abdu `Alî" (servant of `Alî), or "`Abdul-Husayn" (servant of Al-Husayn). In this regard, **Imâm Ibn Hazm** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"Muslim scholars agree on the prohibition of giving children names indicating servitude to other than Allah, such as `Abd `Umar, `Abdul-Ka`bah, and the like. However, there is no unanimous agreement on the prohibition of referring to or mentioning the people who already have these names, such as, '`Abdul-Muttalib,' 'Banî `Abdud-Dâr,' and '`Abdu-Shams,' but not to name after them."*[8]

Moreover, it is detestable to give a child an inappropriate name that suggests a bad quality, such as "Al-`Âsî" (the disobedient), "Kulayb" (doggy), "Hanzalah" (colocynth), "Murrah" (bitter), and "Hazan" (sadness or difficulty). The Prophet (PBUH) hated bad names of persons or places,[9] and he (PBUH) also pointed out:

> *"The dearest of your names to Allah are '`Abdullâh' (servant of Allah) and '`Abdur-Rahmân' (servant of the Entirely Merciful)."*[10]
>
> (Related by Imâm Muslim and other compilers of *Hadîth*)

Thus, parents should choose good names for their children and avoid giving them prohibited or odious names; this is one of parents' duties towards their children.

Back to the issue of *`aqîqah*, the sacrificial animal offered is just like that offered as *udhiyah* with regard to age and characteristics; the animal chosen to be sacrificed as *`aqîqah* should be at the prescribed age for being slaughtered, be free from any physical defects or sickness, and be of proper health and fleshiness. It is also desirable for one to eat from the meat of the sacrificial animal one offers as *`aqîqah*; its meat is to be divided into three parts: one third for the owner, one third to be given as gifts and one third to be given in

charity, just like *udhiyah*. Unlike *udhiyah*, it is insufficient for people to share in buying an animal and sacrifice it as *'aqîqah*. They cannot, for example, share in one camel or one cow and sacrifice it like the case with *udhiyah*. This is because *'aqîqah* is sacrificed for a soul, so it cannot be shared. Moreover, neither the Prophet (PBUH) nor his Companions were reported to have shared in the sacrificial animals offered as *'aqîqah*.

It is the duty of parents to bring up their children on moral values and noble manners so as to grow up as virtuous men and women; an Arab poet said:

The infant seems to grow up

In the way he was brought up.

When the children grow up, it is so difficult to change their characters or natures. Many individuals are corrupt because of the way they were brought up and the lack of moral guidance in their childhood. Therefore, children should be kept away from bad gatherings and corrupt associates. Home should be a righteous, religious atmosphere for a child, for it is the first school in a child's life. Thus, parents should spare their homes all means of corruption and viciousness, especially today, when the means of corruption are prevalent everywhere and fill up homes, except for those safeguarded by Allah's mercy. So, parents should beware of such corruptive means, and bring up their children on worshipping and obeying Allah, honoring their religion, appreciating the Qur'ân and loving it; these are the true means of achieving felicity in both this world and the Hereafter.

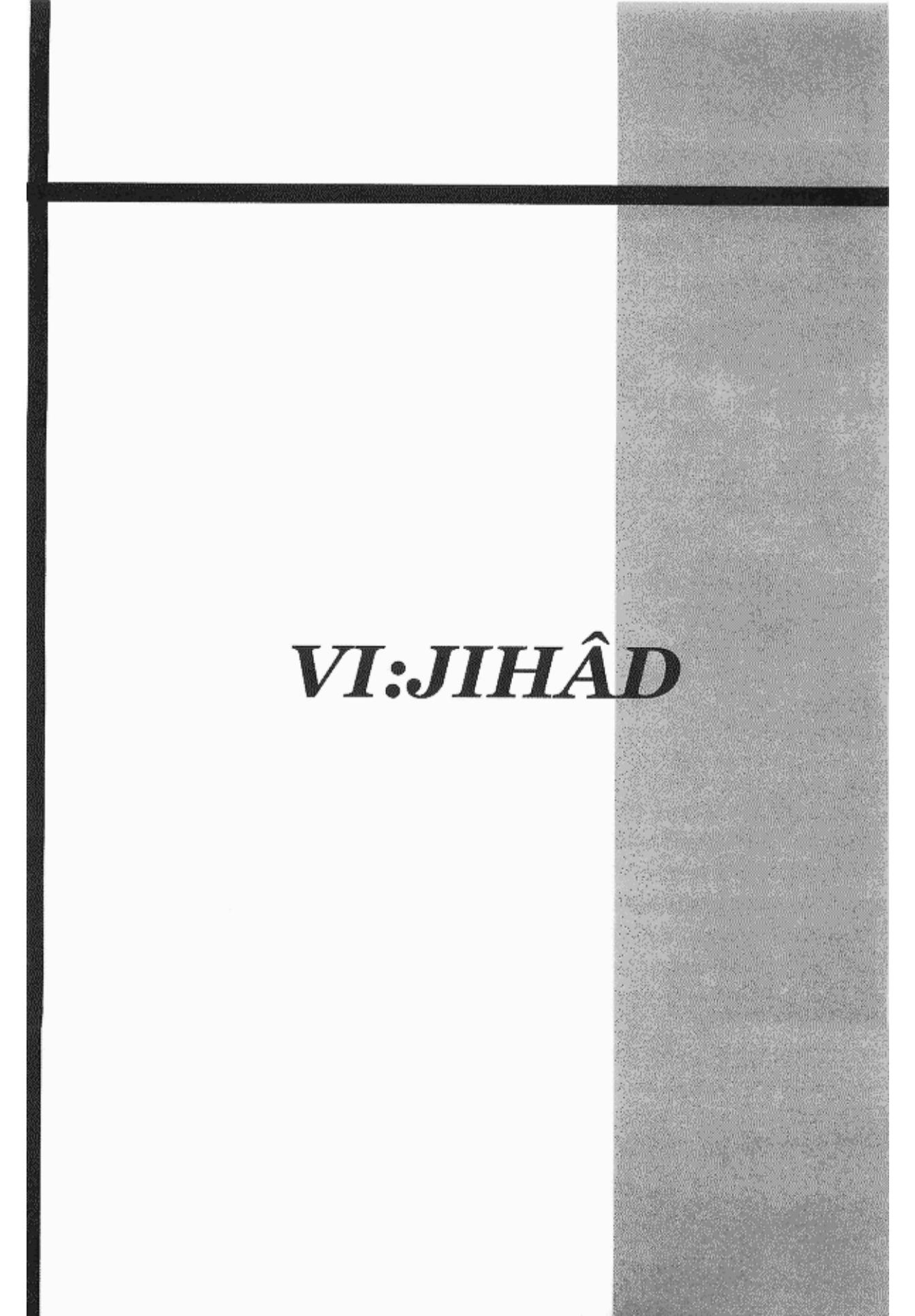
In short, parents or guardians should represent good ideals for their children through their good manners, morals, habits, and ethics. May Allah guide us all to what He likes and pleases.

Endnotes

1 Abû Dâwûd (2841) [3/177], An-Nasâ'î (4230) [4/186], and At-Tirmidhî (1523) [4/99].

2 Abû Dâwûd (2837) [3/175], At-Tirmidhî (1526) [4/101], An-Nasâ'î (4231) [4/186], and Ibn Mâjah (3165) [3/55].

3 Ahmad (23910) [6/31], Abû Dâwûd (2835) [3/174], At-Tirmidhî (1517) [4/96], An-Nasâ'î (4227) [4/185], and Ibn Mâjah (3162) [3/549].

4 The Five Compilers of *Hadîth*.
5 Ahmad (21589) [5/139], Abû Dâwûd (4948) [5/149], and Ibn Hibbân (no. 1944).
6 See: "*Zâdul-Ma`âd*" [2/336].
7 Note that the prefix "`Abd" in Arabic means "servant of." For example, the name "`Abdullâh" means "servant of Allah," and so on.
8 See the footnote of "*Ar-Rawd Al-Murbi`*" [4/246].
9 See: "*Zâdul-Ma`âd*" [2/337] and At-Tirmidhî (2844) [5/134].
10 Muslim (5552) [5/132], Abû Dâwûd (4949) [5/149), At-Tirmidhî (2838) [5/132], and Ibn Mâjah (3728) [4/216].

VI: JIHÂD

Jihâd (Fighting in the Cause of Allah)

Allah has ordained *jihâd* (fighting in the Cause of Allah) in order to render His Word the highest, His Religion the victorious, His enemies the defeated, and to test the faith of His true servants. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"... That [is the command]. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken vengeance upon them [Himself], but [He ordered armed struggle] to test some of you by means of others. And those who are killed in the Cause of Allah - never will He waste their deeds. He will guide them and amend their condition - and admit them to Paradise, which He has made known to them."***
>
> (Qur'ân: Muhammad: 4-6)

In Islam, *jihâd* enjoys a great importance, as it is the highest level in religion and one of the best acts of worship to the extent that some scholars consider

jihâd the sixth pillar of Islam. *Jihâd* is ordained according to the Qur'ân, the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) and consensus (of Muslim scholars). Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Fighting has been enjoined upon you..."***
> (Qur'ân: Al-Baqarah: 216)

The Prophet (PBUH) also fought in the Cause of Allah and used to enjoin *jihâd*[1]; he (PBUH) said:

> *"Whoever dies without fighting in the Cause of Allah, nor does he express any desire (or determination) for it, would die with a characteristic of hypocrisy."*[2]

Linguistically, *jihâd* means fighting the enemy vigorously and jurisprudentially. It involves fighting the disbelievers and it also includes much more activities showing striving in the Cause of Allah, not only mere fighting. **Ibnul-Qayyim** said:

> *"Jihâd is a task which is to be fulfilled by means of heart, tongue, money, or hand. Every Muslim must strive in the Cause of Allah through any of these means."*[3]

Jihâd, in addition, includes striving for the purification of the soul through self-control, striving against Satan and against dissolute, disobedient, and straying people. So, self-restraint is a sort of *jihâd* that a Muslim can achieve through seeking religious knowledge, acting in accordance with the knowledge he learns, and then teaching such knowledge to others. One can strive against Satan, as another type of *jihâd*, through keeping away from the doubtful matters portrayed by Satan and resisting satanic wicked desires. As for striving against the disbelievers, it can be by means of hand (fighting), money, tongue, and heart. A Muslim must also strive against the defiantly disobedient, dissolute, and straying people, as much as he can, forbidding their wrongdoing either by his hand first, then his tongue if he cannot, and finally with his heart if the other means are impossible; it depends.

Jihâd, in fact, is a collective duty which if sufficiently fulfilled by some Muslims, the rest will not be accountable for it as an obligation, and it becomes an act of the *Sunnah* for them. *Jihâd* is the best voluntary act of worship which has great virtues and rewards. There are so many verses in the Noble Qur'ân, as well as many *hadîths*, enjoining *jihâd* and urging all Muslims to undertake it. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

> ***"Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise.***

They fight in the Cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'ân. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? So rejoice in your transaction which you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment."

(Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 111)

For a Muslim, there are certain cases in which *jihâd* is an individual duty:

1) When a Muslim is present at the battlefield, it is obligatory for him to fight and he is prohibited to leave the battle and flee.

2) When enemies attack a Muslim country

   In the aforesaid two cases, a Muslim fights back his enemies as a means of self-defense only, not a conquest. If Muslims abstain from fighting in these two cases, the disbelievers will take their land defiling their sanctities.

3) When a Muslim is needed to help his fellow Muslims fight their enemies.

4) When a Muslim is called by the ruler (or the one in authority) to fight in the Cause of Allah, for the Prophet (PBUH) said:

   "Whenever you are called for fighting in the Cause of Allah, you should go immediately."[4]

   Also, Allah, Exalted be He, says:

   "... When you encounter a company [from the enemy forces], stand firm..." (Qur'ân: Al-Anfâl: 45)

   Moreover, Allah says:

   "... What is [the matter] with you that when you are told to go forth in the Cause of Allah, you adhere heavily to the earth? ..."

   (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 38)

Shaykhul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"Jihâd can be either by the hand or the heart, or by calling Muslims to jihâd through sound argument, eloquence, demonstration, or by helping to prepare others for fighting; it is obligatory for a Muslim to strive in the Cause of Allah as much as he can. On the other hand,

if a Muslim is unable to join his fellows in the battlefield for a legal excuse, he has then, being at home, to support and take care of the families and properties of the Muslim fighters."[5]

It is obligatory for the Muslim ruler (or the one in authority) to check the army before setting out for fighting to exclude whatever does not fit the battlefield, be it related to men or equipment. For example, the ruler (or the one in authority) has to exclude whoever discourages Muslims to fight, disheartening and dispiriting them. He should also exclude those fearful and fainthearted men who might dissuade the other fighters, and those who report the news of the Muslim army to the enemies, or cause dissention among the Muslim fighters. The Muslim ruler should also appoint a commander who can lead the army in accordance with the Islamic principles and policies. It is obligatory for the Muslim army to obey their commander in what is right, to give him sincere advice, and to be patient with him, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you..." (Qur'ân: An-Nisâ': 59)

Jihâd has been ordained in Islam for some noble objectives:

- To rid people of the worship of *taghûts* (false objects of worship) and idols, and to lead them to worship Allah, Alone, associating no partner with Him, for He is the One Who has created them, and gives them provisions. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

  "And fight them until there is no fitnah and [until] the religion [i.e. worship], all of it, is for Allah..." (Qur'ân: Al-Anfâl: 39)

- To eliminate injustice and give rights to their rightful owners, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

  "Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory. [They are] those who have been evicted from their homes without right - only because they say, 'Our Lord is Allah...' " (Qur'ân: Al-Hajj: 39-40)

- To humiliate the disbelievers, take revenge on them, and weaken their power, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

  "Fight them; Allah will punish them by your hands and will disgrace them and give you victory over them and satisfy the breasts [i.e. desires] of a believing people. And remove the fury

in their [i.e. the believers'] hearts. And Allah turns in forgiveness to whom He wills; and Allah is Knowing and Wise."

(Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 14-15)

Fighting the enemies must be preceded by calling them to Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) used to call the enemies to Islam, if they did not know about it, before fighting them[6]. He (PBUH) also sent messages to kings calling them to Islam[7] and used to advise the commanders of the Muslim army to call the disbelievers to Islam before fighting them, and not to fight whomever would accept Islam. This is because the main objective of fighting in Islam is to eliminate disbelief and polytheism, and to help people enter the Religion of Allah (Islam). Thus, if this noble objective is fulfilled without fighting, Muslims are not allowed to fight others;[8] and Allah knows best.

Jihâd has so many rulings mentioned in detail in volumes on *Sharî'ah* (Islamic Law) among which are the following:

- If a Muslim's parents (or one of them) are free Muslims, a Muslim is not permitted to volunteer to fight in the Cause of Allah unless they permit him to. To illustrate, when a man, whose parents were alive, wanted to join the Muslim army in *jihâd*, the Prophet (PBUH) said to him:

  "*... Then go and exert yourself in their service (i.e. his parents).*"[9]

  This is because filial piety is an individual duty in Islam whereas *jihâd* is a collective duty, and an individual duty is considered worthier of fulfillment than a collective one.

- The ruler (or the one in authority) must appoint the commanders of the army and he is permitted to give anyone he selects from the spoils if this serves the cause of *jihâd*. Then, he is to divide the rest of the booty among all the soldiers.

- It is impermissible to kill a child, a woman, a monk, an old man, a man infected with a chronic disease, or a blind man, as long as they do not fight against Muslims nor incite others to do so. When captured, those people become slaves to Muslims; the Prophet (PBUH) used to have such people as slaves when he captured them[10].

- Muslims are permitted to take the spoils of battles including all the money and property taken forcefully through fighting the non-Muslim enemies, as well as any ransom (taken from them). Spoils are to be divided among whoever witnessed the battle, whether they have

fought or not, for they are considered supporters of all the Muslim fighters as they have been ready to fight at anytime. Such people are legally considered like fighters, as `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"Spoils are for those who witnessed the battle."[11]

- As for how the booty should be divided, the ruler (or the one in authority) is to dedicate one-fifth of the booty to Allah and His Messenger (PBUH), i.e. to be allocated to the relatives of the Messenger (PBUH), the orphans, the poor, the needy, and the wayfarers. Then the ruler is to divide the remaining four-fifths among the Muslim fighters; one share among the infantry and the remaining three shares among the cavalry; each cavalry soldier receives a share for himself and two more shares for having a horse. It was related by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim that when Allah's Messenger (PBUH) divided the booty of the Battle of Khaybar, he granted each cavalry soldier three shares; two for his horse and one for himself[12].

- The spoils of war can be divided by the representative of the ruler on the latter's behalf.

- It is prohibited to embezzle a part of the war booty before its distribution; Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"It is not [attributable] to any prophet that he would act unfaithfully [in regard to war booty]. And whoever betrays [taking unlawfully] will come with what he took on the Day of Resurrection..." (Qur'ân: Âlu `Imrân: 161)

- It is obligatory for the ruler (or the one in authority) to mete out discretionary punishment to whoever embezzles part of the war booty before its distribution as a means of deterrence to him and his likes.

- If the spoils are estates, the ruler has the right to choose whether to divide them among the fighters or to declare them *waqfs* (legal endowments) for the benefit of all Muslims, getting a regular *kharâj* (land tax) from their new Muslim owners.

- The property left by the disbelievers when terrified by Muslims, the property of an heirless person, and a fifth of one-fifth of the whole booty (the share of Allah's Messenger) are considered *fay'* (spoils gained without fighting or war) allocated for the benefit of Muslims.

- It is permissible for the ruler to agree to a truce with the disbelievers to stop fighting for a specific period if this serves the interests of Muslims, and only when it is permissible to delay *jihâd* due to the weakness of Muslims. The Prophet (PBUH) agreed to a peace treaty with the disbelievers (of Mecca) at Al-Hudaybiyah Peace Treaty,[13] and made a peace treaty with the Jews in Medina. However, it is impermissible for the ruler to agree to a truce with the disbelievers when Muslims are strong and able to fight.

- If the ruler fears that the disbelievers may breach the truce, he is permitted to terminate the truce, provided that he informs them thereof before fighting. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

  "If you [have reason to] fear from a people betrayal, throw [their treaty] back to them, [putting you] on equal terms. Indeed, Allah does not like traitors." (Qur'ân: Al-Anfâl: 58)

  Thus, Allah commanded the Prophet (PBUH) to inform the disbelievers of his termination of the truce.

- It is permissible for the ruler to agree to a covenant of protection with the People of the Scripture (i.e. the Christians and the Jews) and the Magi, granting them freedom of religion, provided that they give the *jizyah*[14] and adhere to the Islamic laws. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

  "Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth [i.e. Islam] from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled."

  (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 29)

  The money taken from the *Dhimmî*s[15] once a year as *jizyah*, while they are humbled, is to allow them to stay in an Islamic state (without fighting them).

- The *jizyah* is not to be taken from a child, a woman, or an insane person, nor is it to be taken from a man infected with a chronic disease, a blind man, an old man, or a needy who cannot afford it.

- So long as the *Dhimmî*s give the *jizyah*, it is obligatory for the ruler to accept it, not to fight them, and to defend them against attackers. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"... Until they give the jizyah..." (Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 29)

Thus, Allah has made their payment of *jizyah* a reason for not fighting them. The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

"Ask them for jizyah and if they agree, then accept it from them and stop fighting them."[16]

Allah knows best.

- It is permissible for the ruler to grant a disbelieving individual protection even from Muslims as long as he causes no harm to Muslims, for Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah [i.e. the Qur'ân]. Then deliver him to his place of safety..."

(Qur'ân: At-Tawbah: 6)

It is also permissible for a ruler to grant protection to all or some disbelievers since he has authority over all people living in the Islamic country under his rule. This authority is not given to anyone of the Muslim subjects except with the permission of the ruler himself. However, it is permissible for a Muslim governor of a district to grant protection to disbelievers living in a neighboring district.

Endnotes

1 See: Ahmad (12186) [3/124], Abû Dâwûd (2504) [3/18], An-Nasâ'î (3192) [3/358], and Al-Hâkim (2472) [2/81].
2 Muslim (4908) [7/58].
3 See: *"Zâdul-Ma`âd"* [3/64].
4 Al-Bukhârî (1834) [4/61] and Muslim (3289) [5/127].
5 See: *Al-Ikhtiyârât* [447].
6 See Ibn Abû Shaybah (33057) [6/480].
7 See Muslim (4585) [6/329].
8 See Muslim (4497) [6/265].
9 Al-Bukhârî (3004) [6/169], Muslim (6451) [8/320], and At-Tirmidhî (1675) [4/191].
10 Al-Bukhârî (2307) [4/609].
11 `Abdur-Razzâq in his *"Musannaf"* (9689) [5/302], Al-Bayhaqî (17954) [9/86] and (9/86—87), and Al-Bukhârî [6/270].

12 Al-Bukhârî (2863) [6/83] and Muslim (4561) [6/304].
13 Al-Bukhârî (2698) [5/373] and Muslim (4605) [6/348].
14 *Jizyah*: A tribute or a tax required of non-Muslims living in an Islamic state exempting them from military service and entitling them to the protection of the Islamic state. Concurrently, *Zakâh* is not taken from them, being an obligation only upon Muslims.
15 *Dhimmî*: A non-Muslim living in and under the protection of an Islamic state.
16 Muslim.

APPENDICES

GLOSSARY

NOTE: For easier search for the terms beginning with "Al-" "Ar-" "Ad-" "As-" etc. omit them, as they are in Arabic, equivalents to the article "the". For example, a term like As-Safâ will be found under letter "S", and Al-Wasîlah under letter "W".

A

The *Ansâr*	The Medinian Helpers; the inhabitants of Medina who had accepted Islam and supported the Prophet (PBUH) and all the *Muhâjirûn* (the Emigrants) upon their arrival at the Medina.
***Âyatul-Kursî* (the Verse of the Throne)**	Verse No. 255 of the Sura of *Al-Baqarah* (*the Cow*); Chapter No. 2 of the Qur'ân.
`Awrah	*`Awrah* refers to the private parts or parts of the body which are illegal to expose to others; a male's *`awrah* is from the navel to the knees whereas in another view it is said to be the external organs of sex and excretion. As for a female's *`awrah*, it includes all her body in one view whereas in another it is all her body with the exception of her face and hands.

B

Basmalah	Saying, "*Bismillâhir-Rahmânir-Rahîm*" i.e. "In the Name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful."
Batn Muhassir	A valley between Muzdalifah and Minâ.
Bid`ah	A matter innovated in religion.
Burqu`	A veil covering the face and has two holes for the eyes to permit vision.

C

Collective duty	A religious duty which if sufficiently fulfilled by some Muslims, the rest will not be accountable for it as an obligation, and it becomes an act of the *Sunnah* for them.

D

The Day of `Arafah	The ninth day of Dhul-Hijjah.
The Day of *Tarwiyah*	The eighth day of Dhul-Hijjah.
The Days of *Tashrîq*	The eleventh, the twelfth, and the thirteenth of Dhul-Hijjah, i.e. the three days following the Day of Sacrifice.
Dhikr	Invocations implying remembrance and mentioning of Allah.

Dhimmi	A free non-Muslim living in and under the protection of a Muslim state.
Dinar	An old Arab coin that equals 2.975 grams of gold.
Dirham (of silver)	A dirham of silver equals 2.975 grams of silver.

F

Faqîh	A scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence.
Fatwa	A legal opinion issued by a *mufti* [a Muslim scholar specialized in issuing legal rulings] in response to a question on a point of the Islamic Law.
The Five Compilers of *Hadîth*	They are Imâms Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, At-Tirmidhî, An-Nasâ'î, and Ibn Mâjah.
The Four Imâms	They are Imâms Abû Hanîfah, Imâm Mâlik, Imâm Ash-Shâfi`î, and Imâm Ahmad.

G

The Group of Compilers of *Hadîth*	They are Al-Bukhârî, Muslim, Ahmad, Abû Dâwûd, At-Tirmidhî, An-Nasâ'î, and Ibn Mâjah.

H

Hasan* (good) *hadîth	It is a *hadîth* whose chain of transmission is linked to the narration of an authority with weak exactitude, and the *hadîth* is free from eccentricity or blemish.
Hijrah	The Prophet's Immigration to Medina.
Hijr Ismâ`îl (Ishmael's Precinct)	The semi-circular short wall located a few meters east of the Ka`bah and considered part of it.

I

Ifrâd	It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *Hajj* only, keeping in the state of *ihrâm* until he finishes performing the rites of *Hajj*.
Individual duty	A religious duty whose obligation extends to every Muslim.
Imâm (in prayer)	The *imâm* is the one who leads the congregational prayer.
Istihdâd	Shaving the pubic hair.
Istihâdah	Vaginal bleeding other than menstruation.
Istijmâr	Cleaning one's stool and urine exits after defecation or urination with stones or what may substitute for them.
Istinjâ'	Cleaning one's stool and urine exits after defecation or urination with water.

J

The Jahmiyyah	It is an Islamic sect that denies some of the Attributes of Allah, claiming that those attributes are ascribed to people and cannot be ascribed to Allah. This belief violates that of the Adherents of the *Sunnah* and Muslim Community.
Janâbah	A state of major ritual impurity related to sexual discharge
Jamratul-`Aqabah	It is a small stone-made pillar in a walled place. There are three *jamrahs* situated at Minâ. The closest one to Mecca is known as *Jamratul-`Aqabah*; it is also called the Great *Jamrah* and the Last *Jamrah*.
Jihâd	Fighting in the Cause of Allah
Jizyah	A tribute or a tax required from non-Muslims living in an Islamic state exempting them from military service and entitling them to the protection of the Islamic state. Concurrently, *Zakâh* is not taken from them, being an obligation only upon Muslims.

K

Khimâr	A shawl-like cloth covering the head and shoulders worn by Muslim women.
Khuffs	Leather socks or shoes or their likes.

L

The Lawgiver	The Lawgiver of *Shari`ah* (i.e., Islamic Law) is Allah, Exalted be He; the term can also refer to the Prophet (PBUH) as he never ordained but what was revealed to him by Allah.

M

Mahram	A woman's husband or any unmarriageable kin of hers.
Marfû`* (traceable) *hadîth	It is whatever word, deed, approval or attribute, traced directly back to the Prophet (PBUH) with a connected or disconnected chain of transmission.
Mithqâl	A standard measure that equals 4.25 grams.
Miqâts of Hajj	The fixed times for *Hajj*. It also refers to the sites for entering the state of *ihram*.
Mudd	A standard measure that equals 543 grams.
Muhall	The site for entering the state of *ihram*.
Muhrim	The one in a state of ritual consecration for *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) or *`Umrah* (Lesser Pilgrimage).
Mukâtab	A slave who has concluded a contract with his/her master to pay him a certain ransom for his/her freedom.

Mursal* (incompletely transmitted) *hadîth	It is a *hadîth* whose chain of transmission lacks a Companion transmitter, i.e. a *hadîth* that a Successor of the Companions has directly attributed to the Prophet without mentioning a Companion.
Mustahâdah	A woman in a state of *istihâdah* (i.e. a woman having vaginal bleeding other than menstruation).
The Mutazilites (Mu`tazilah)	It is an Islamic sect that claims that those who commit major sins are in a state between belief and disbelief. This belief violates that of the Adherents of the *Sunnah* and Muslim Community.
Mutawâtir* (continuously recurrent) *hadîth	It is a *hadîth* reported by a large number of narrators whose agreement upon telling a lie is inconceivable (this condition must be met in the entire chain from the beginning to the end).

N

***(Nisâb* (in Zakâh**	The minimum amount upon which *Zakâh* is due.
Niqâb	A face-covering veil worn by Muslim women.

O

The opening *takbîr* (in prayer)	Opening prayer with saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).

Q

The *qiblah*	The direction of prayer, namely towards the Ka`bah.
Qirân	It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing both `*Umrah* and *Hajj* together, or to assume *ihrâm* for `*Umrah* then, before starting the *tawâf* for `*Umrah*, a pilgrim intends performing both `*Umrah* and *Hajj* either from the *miqât* or before the *tawâf* of `*Umrah*. In this case, a pilgrim is to perform both *tawâf* and *sa`î* for both.
Qudsî* (Divine) *hadîth	Divine Words, other than the Glorious Qur'ân, revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) from Allah. Unlike the Qur'ân, the wording of the *Qudsî* (Divine) *hadîth* are neither used for worship nor deemed miraculous.

R

The Râfidah	A *Shiite* group that refused the caliphates of Abû Bakr As-Siddîq and `Umar Ibnul-Khattâb and waged accusations against them and against many of the Prophet's Companions as well.

S

Sâ`	A standard measure that equals 2172 grams.
Sahîh* (authentic) *hadîth	It is a *hadîth* whose chain of transmission has been transmitted by truly pious persons who have been known for their uprightness and exactitude; such a *hadîth* is free from eccentricity and blemish.

**`The *Shaf*** It generally refers to any prayer consisting of an even number of *rak`ahs*, and it particularly refers to the even number of *rak`ahs* performed before the final *rak`ah* of the *Witr* Prayer.

Ash-Shâm The Levant; the region covering Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine.

Sidr The extract of the lote tree leaves.

The *Sunan* The *Sunan* refers to compilations of the Prophetic *hadîths* classified according to the Islamic jurisprudential themes; the main four compilers of the *Sunan* are Abû Dâwûd, Ibn Mâjah, At-Tirmidhî and An-Nasâ'î.

T

Tahajjud The Night Vigil Prayer.

Tahlîl Saying, "*Lâ Ilâha illallâh*" (i.e. There is no deity but Allah).

Tahmîd Saying, "*Al-hamdu-lillâh*" (i.e. Praise be to Allah).

***Tahmîd* (in prayer)** Saying as a reply to *tasmî`*, "*Rabbanâ-walakal-hamd*" i.e. "Our Lord, to You be (All) praise."

Takbîr Saying, "*Allâhu-Akbar*" (i.e. Allah is the Greatest).

Talbiyah A formula recited by a pilgrim during *Hajj* or `*Umrah* after assuming the state of *ihrâm*; a pilgrim says, "Here I am at Your service, O Allah, here I am at Your service. Here I am at Your service, You have no partner, here I am at Your service. Verily, all praise, blessings, and dominion are Yours. You have no partner."

***Tamattu`*** It means that a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* (state of ritual consecration) for performing `*Umrah* during the months of *Hajj*, and then, after performing `*Umrah*, a pilgrim assumes *ihrâm* for performing *Hajj* in the same season.

***Ta'mîn* (in prayer)** Saying, "*Âmîn*" (i.e. "Amen") after the recitation of *Al-Fâtihah* (the Opening Sura of the Qur'ân) in prayer.

***Tarâwîh* Prayer** Supererogatory prayer performed after the `*Ishâ'* (Night) Prayer during the month of Ramadân.

Tasbîh Saying, "*Subhân-Allâh*" (i.e. Glory be to Allah).

***Tasbîh* (in prayer)** Saying, "*Subhâna Rabbiyal-`Azîm*" (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great") while bowing, and "*Subhâna Rabbiyal-A`lâ*" (i.e. "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High") while prostrating.

Tashahhud	Reciting: "(All) compliments, prayers and good things are due to Allah; peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the Mercy of Allah and His blessings (be upon you). Peace be upon us and upon the pious servants of Allah. I testify that there is no deity (worthy of worship) but Allah, Alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. O Allah! Confer Your blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You conferred Your blessings upon Ibrâhim (Abraham) and the family of Ibrâhîm. Verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable. And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You blessed Ibrâhim and the family of Ibrâhîm. Verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable."
Taslîm	Saying the final *Salâm*s in prayer (saying, "*As-salamu `alaykum wa Rahmatullâh*" i.e. "Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah") when concluding prayer.
Tasmî`	Saying "*Sami`allâhu liman hamidah*" i.e. "Allah listens to the one who praises Him," when standing following bowing in prayer.
Tasmiyah	Saying "*Bismillâh*" (i.e. In the Name of Allah).
Tawâf	Circumambulating the Ka`bah.
Tayammum	Performing dry ablution with clean earth (when water is unavailable or one cannot use it).
The Two *Sahihs*	The Two Authentic Books of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
The Two Testifications of Faith	Saying, "I testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

W

Al-Wasîlah	It is the greatest and the most superior degree in Paradise reserved for only one of Allah's servants, and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) hopes to be that one. So, he (PBUH) asks everyone of his nation to pray to Allah following each prayer call (*adhân*) to grant him that place, *Al-Wasîlah*.
The *Witr* Prayer	A supererogatory prayer consisting of an odd number of *rak`ahs* (one, three, five, seven, nine, eleven or thirteen) and it is performed any time between the *'Ishâ'* (Night) and the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayers.
Wasq	A standard measure that equals 130320 grams.

Y

The Yamânî (the Yemeni) Corner	The southern corner of the Ka'bah that faces Yemen.

Z

Zakâh	*Zakâh* is an annual expenditure for the benefit of the Muslim community, primarily to help the poor. It is required from those Muslims who have excess wealth. Paying *Zakâh* is one of the five main pillars of Islam (for more elaboration, refer to the chapter on *Zakâh*).
***Zakâtul-Fitr* (Fast-breaking *Zakâh*)**	An obligatory charity to be paid by the rich to the poor. In a juristic view, it is to be paid at any time throughout Ramadân, whereas it is most preferable to give it two or three days right before the Fast-breaking Feast (*'Îdul-Fitr*). A third view maintains that it is to be given before going out for performing the Prayer of the Fast-breaking Feast.
Zihâr	*Zihâr* is the saying of a husband to his wife, when he wants to abstain from having sex with her, "(Sexually,) you are to me like the back of my mother," i.e. unlawful to approach sexually. That was a type of divorce practiced by Arabs in the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance (the *Jâhiliyyah*).

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TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

Arabic Character	Symbol	Example		Arabic Character	Symbol	Example
أ/ء	a/’	amen/`ishâ’		ف	f	faith/fatwa
ب	b	bad/Bilâl		ق	q	Qurâ'n
ت	t	tap/tasmiyah		ك	k	kill/Ka`bah
ث	th	think/thaqîf		ل	l	qiblah
ج	j	Jew/janâbah		م	m	man/marwah
ح	h	Muẖammad		ن	n	Noah/nasî'ah
خ	kh	Al-Bukhârî		هـ	h	has/hilâl
د	d	day/diyah		ة	h/t	zakâh/zakâtul-fiṯr
ذ	dh	Dhul-Ḫijjah		و	w	way/witr
ر	r	far/ribâ		ي	y	yard/talbiyah
ز	z	zero/zayd		ـَ	a	faḏl
س	s	say/sura		ـِ	i	fiqh
ش	sh	show/`ishâ’		ـُ	u	sunnah
ص	s̱	`As̱r		ـَا	â	Âdam/siwâk
ض	ḏ	ifâḏah		ـُو	û	Dâwûd
ط	ṯ	ṯawâf		ـِي	î	ẖadîth/ẖanafî
ظ	ẕ	ẕuhr		ـَوْ	aw	await/`awrah
ع	`	rak`ah		ـَيْ	ay	ayman
غ	gh	maghrib				